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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FIGHTING IN HOCKEY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

by

© RONALD HILL

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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OF MASTER OF ARTS

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EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING, 1986

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Fighting In Hockey: A Phenomenological Analysis submitted by Ronald Hill in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Supervisor

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Date February 25, 1986

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family, most especially to my parents, whose 'long-distance' support and encouragement I am only just now beginning to fully understand and appreciate.

ABSTRACT

A critical review of the literature revealed that much research on violence and aggression has been conducted from the biased perspective of a pre-existing 'theoretical framework'. The resulting research has tended to place meanings upon the event, rather than deriving meanings from an examination of the event itself. By utilizing a narrowly defined research paradigm, this body of research has provided limited knowledge and has left many gaps in our understanding of violent behavior. Research investigating sports violence has tended to follow this pattern. In particular, research investigating the qualitative or experiential nature of sports violence was not prevalent. A phenomenological investigation of fighting in hockey was undertaken as a means of attempting to fill this gap.

Twelve informants from the University of Alberta men's hockey team were interviewed. These interviews were taped and transcribed, and nine of the transcripts were subject to an in-depth phenomenological analysis. A discription of the experiential nature of fighting in hockey was developed.

Key findings stressed the importance of understanding the game context in order to understand the phenomena of fighting as it occurs within this game. A typical pattern of events that lead up to the occurrence of a fight was described. The relevant decisions involved in this pattern of events were highlighted, as well as the values and norms of the game context that affect these decisions. It was noted that once this pattern of events was initiated it became very difficult for players not to fight; due to the context of the game and the 'pressure' this context had on their decisions.

Fighting was experienced as an intense and emotionally arousing event. Players usually could not remember a lot of the actions that took place, such as how many punches they threw, how many punches they landed, or how many times they got punched. Pain was also something that was rarely felt until later. Players further noted that they often fought to look good, i.e., to create or maintain their role as a 'tough guy', even when they knew they were going to get beat. As this element was analysed it became clear that players were more concerned about the image they projected than they were about losing the fight.

Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	4
III. LITERATURE REVIEW	7
A. Psychological Perspectives	8
B. Sociological Perspectives	12
C. Social / Psychological Perspectives	16
D. Anthropological / Ethological Perspectives	17
E. Methodological Perspectives	21
F. Literature Review: Summary	24
IV. METHODOLOGY	26
A. Informants	26
B. Data Collection:	26
C. Structure of Interviews:	27
D. Data Analysis:	28
E. Pilot Study	32
V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: INTRODUCTION	33
VI. THE GAME	35
A. It's part of the game	35
B. Concentration	36
C. Rules	37
D. Junior vs. University	39
E. The Body	41
F. Us vs. Them	44
G. Conflict	45
H. Frustration	46
I. Intimidation	47
J. Freedom	50
K. Respect	52
L. Roles / Images	53
M. Mental Fights	59

N. Summary: The Game 65
VII. EVENTS LEADING UP TO A FIGHT 68
A. Provocations 68
B. Limits 76
C. Responses 82
Ignoring the Provocation 82
Backing Down 84
Standing Up 87
D. Escalation 90
E. The Confrontation 95
VIII. THE FIGHT! 109
A. Technique 109
B. Fatigue 112
C. Intensity 113
Desire 113
Concentration 117
Hatred 119
Ticking Out 122
D. Attention / Awareness 125
E. Winning 132
IX. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 139
A. Summary 139
B. Future Directions 147
X. BIBLIOGRAPHY 151
XI. APPENDIX: TWO LISTS OF CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS 157

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of violence and aggression has received a great deal of attention from researchers in a variety of fields. This arises mainly from an inherent value judgement that violence and many forms of aggression are 'bad' or 'wrong', and that their elimination will benefit humankind. Psychologists have tried to explain what types of persons are likely to engage in violent behavior, while sociologists have examined the environmental conditions that are associated with this type of behavior. Social psychologists have attempted to combine these two perspectives and explain what types of situations and what types of individuals are likely to interact to produce violent behavior. Anthropologists have explained violent behavior in terms of their dominant paradigm, which conceptualizes the human species as an animal, subject to similar biological explanations used for other animals. Philosophers and historians have also made a contribution to the research in this area. This abundance of research is testimony to the perceived seriousness of the 'problem' of violence and aggression.

Recently, subsystems in society and violent types of behavior within them have also been examined. For example, violence within prisons, gangs, or certain socio-economic or ethnic groups have been studied. The rationale for this is that these social systems represent areas of study worthy in their own right, and the study of these sub-systems may shed some light on the broader social system of which they are a part. It is toward the understanding of one such sub-system, sport, that this study is directed.

Hill (1983) reviews some of the justifications for studying violence and aggression in sports. Among these are the belief that violence is a 'problem' which if solved will be of benefit both to the world of sports, and to other violence prone situations (the assumption is that a solution to sport violence will be generalizable to these other situations). In other words the study of sports violence may help to alleviate it's prevalence in sports, and may also have applications to the broader social system of which sport is a part. This point echos the sentiment of Mills (1959) and his characterization of good social scientific research.

How is violence seen to be a problem? An examination of the research demonstrates that even this question is open to much debate and disagreement. Some suggest that it is a form of 'over-exuberant' aggressiveness or competitiveness. Others

have linked it to a natural 'drive' which builds up over time and requires a periodic cathartic release. Others have suggested that violence in sports is a form of self-expression and self-control in a social system where athletes are increasingly being denied opportunities to express themselves and be in control of their sports world. Some have not attempted to define the problem, preferring instead to concentrate on possible solutions to it's manifestations.

Most of the research reflects this prescriptive intention. Violence is theorized to be a 'problem', despite the difficulty in defining just exactly what violence really is, or the nature and/or causes of this 'problem'. Many researchers have unquestioningly accepted this conceptualization, and concentrated their research efforts on how this 'problem' might be solved. The 'solution' most research seeks is a reduction in incidences of violent behavior.

This is a naive approach to research. By failing to formulate the research question accurately and adequately, i.e., develop a comprehensive understanding of what violence in sports is, much of this research has done a dis-service to the scientific community. Because it is lacking in a comprehensive framework from which to understand this phenomena, this research fails to account for aggression or violence which is manifest in different types of behavior than that which is being studied. For example, it does not explain 'ritualized aggression', which Marsh et al., (1978b) theorize to be a form of violence and aggression manifest by a variety of different external behaviors. Ritualized aggression has as it's common element that it is directed towards dehumanizing the other person. Ritualized aggression, as Marsh et al., (1978b) conceive it, is a form of 'psychological' violence rather than 'physical' violence. A scientific 'paradigm' that narrowly defined violence in terms of external physical behavior(s) and then attempted to reduce these incidences of violence would not produce a solution to the 'problem' of ritualized aggression. Ritualized aggression could be manifest in many different types of behaviors, and only a few of these would be addressed by research directed at reducing outward incidences of violent behavior. This is because it may not be the overt behavior that is really the 'problem', as this approach assumes. The real 'problem' may lie elsewhere and require a different type of solution. In order to make generalizations that will have validity to many different situations we must not only have a solution that is

generalizable, but our conception of the phenomena under investigation must also be generalizable to these diverse situations.

It is clear that a solution to the 'problem' of violence in sports must begin with an adequate understanding of this phenomena, so that solutions, if required, can be accurately directed to the real problem. This type of understanding would greatly aid current research efforts, which suffer from incomplete formulations of the 'problem'. Violence and aggression occur in a variety of diverse situations and are manifest through a large variety of behaviors. This is also true of violent behavior that occurs in the sub-system of sport, which contains such diverse forms of behavior as fan violence, illegal athlete violence, i.e., fighting in hockey; and legal athlete violence, i.e., boxing or other forms of competitive combatives.

The multiplicity of violent situations and behaviors, even within sport, make a comprehensive study of all of these events, and an accurate understanding of them, unfeasible for this research. This study will therefore provide a preliminary analysis of one element of sport violence, namely fighting in hockey, with the intent of 'paving the way' for future researchers who are interested in furthering an understanding of violent situation(s).

The approach of this study will therefore be exploratory. It's purpose will be to develop an understanding of fighting in hockey. The data will be gathered from those who are the closest to this experience, i.e., the hockey players who have been in fights before. It is believed that their experiences can be utilized to develop a more comprehensive understanding of fighting in hockey.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this research is to examine and describe the 'experience' of fighting in hockey as it is 'lived' by the players involved in it. By focussing on the experiences of those who have engaged in fighting in hockey, a more accurate understanding of this phenomena can be developed. This research will not adopt or suffer from biases or conceptualizations that are 'placed upon' the 'data', but rather will develop an understanding of fighting from direct contact with this event as lived by hockey players. The resulting 'picture' of fighting will be more 'true' to the lived experience than if it was developed from an abstract conceptual analysis which had no direct contact with this experience.

The understanding of fighting in hockey will be developed in a phenomenological or 'discriptive' analysis. By developing a descriptive analysis of this experience, the researcher must not only come to understand this experience, but he must develop this understanding sufficiently so that he is able to adequately inform and relate it to others.

The study of lived experiences of events, resulting in qualitative descriptive analyses, is properly the study of phenomenology. Phenomenology attempts to develop an unbiased and thus more accurate understanding of phenomena, in this case fighting in hockey. It's prescriptive methodology is described by the phrase "To the things". This has reference to going to the phenomena under investigation. The experience being studied is the central focus of such research. In contrast, traditional research methods often focus on the broader theoretical perspectives, with the event being studied serving only as a 'case' from which these perspectives can be further understood. In this study hockey players who have experienced the phenomena have been utilized as the researcher's main source of data.

There are several rationales for this approach. One major fault of much current research in this area is a preoccupation with objectivity. This has led to an abstraction from the event being studied. A conceptual understanding has developed and replaced our experiential understanding of the world.[1] There exists some research done from a sociological perspective that is not as abstracted from the experiential understanding of fighting in hockey. Through combining participant observation methods with survey

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[1]See Pirsig, (1974) for a treatise on this point.

methods, this research has remained in closer contact with the 'experiential nature' of the phenomena. This research, which will be reviewed in the following section, has been utilized as a starting point for this study.

This study will combine some of the general trends and results derived from this sociological research with a new perspective and methodology. This new 'world view' is capable of producing knowledge which will complement and elaborate our current understanding. When combined with the existing knowledge, this phenomenological approach will help in the development of a more precise and elaborate understanding of fighting in hockey, and hopefully of other similar types of behavior.

The chief reason for selecting fighting as a topic of phenomenological investigation was that there was no research that discussed the 'lived experience' of fighting, or attempted to develop an understanding of what it is like for a person to fight. Vast amounts of research have been conducted on the topic of violence and aggression, but there was very little data available which helped one to understand the experiential nature of this phenomena. The majority of research is oriented towards asking 'why' questions as opposed to 'what' questions. Thus there are situations where researchers attempt to measure and/or observe, manipulate and/or control such diverse 'types' of behavior as instrumental vs. hostile aggression, while it has not been shown that these differences are actually present in the experience of the person who is engaging in the behavior. It is believed that a more complete understanding of the phenomena (the 'what' question) will help to better explain why these behaviors occur.

Related to this was the failure of a large body of research to arrive at an explicit and comprehensive definition of what constitutes aggressive, violent behavior.[2] Since fighting is an example that could be considered representative of aggressive violent behavior, an understanding of what fighting is like from the point of view of someone who is experiencing it may help to explicate and delineate its basic essential qualities. This will aid researchers who have a desire to 'bracket' the concept of fighting and aggression with a more formalized and exact definition, which in turn will be useful for more

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[2]For a brief review of some of the many ways that aggression has been approached by psychologists and sociologists see Bandura (1973) pp. 1-5; Tedeschi et al., (1974) pp. 541-542; Stonner (1976) pp. 235-236; and Zillmann (1979) pp. 21-45; and for a review by philosophers see Wiener et al., (1974); and Stanage (1974).

quantitative research purposes.

Finally, it has been observed that very little is really known or understood about the experience of fighting in hockey. A pilot study was instrumental in making it clear that even people who have frequently engaged in fighting in hockey do not have a clear understanding of this experience. They do not know what it is like to 'get into a fight'. This potentially problematic statement must be clarified, so that the criticism: 'If they do not know, then how do you propose to obtain information from them?' can be alleviated. This can be done by noting that it is in the sense that Berger and Luckman (1966) use 'know' that the word is used here. They suggest that one's subjective experiences 'become known' as one verbalizes them in a reflexive attitude. Hence the task of this research becomes "...to give a direct description of our experience as it is, without taking account of its psychological origin and the causal explanations which the scientist, the historian, or the sociologist may be able to provide..."(Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. vii).

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Just what is violence in sport? Is psychological violence in the form of dehumanizing an opposing player a kind of violence? Is violence related to aggression? Are violence and aggression different?[3] Are violence and/or aggression related to competitiveness, and therefore part of competitive sports, especially physical contact sports? A brief review of some of the research which has been done to try to alleviate the 'problem' of violence in sport will quickly show that these and many other similar questions have not been adequately answered.

There are several major theoretical frameworks which have been used to investigate the phenomena of violence and aggression. These theoretical frameworks determine the perspective or 'what' is being studied, and the methodology, or 'how' it ought to be studied.[4] These theoretical frameworks have inherent within them certain biases and assumptions. These biases and assumptions are fundamental to the research process, and include such basic things as what constitutes a valid area of research, the types of questions that are to be asked, the kind and amount of data that will constitute an 'answer' to these questions, how these data will be collected, etc. These biases and assumptions greatly influence the conclusions each of these theoretical frameworks produces.[5]

A review of these theoretical frameworks and their major underlying assumptions will show how these influence the research process, and how a different 'kind' of knowledge results from these different approaches. Some of the major assumptions

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[3]The terms 'violence' and 'aggression' in all their various forms have been and will continue to be used interchangeably throughout this paper. This is partly due to the fact that no comprehensive yet specific definitions of these terms has been proposed, and because one of the tasks of this research is to understand the phenomena described by these terms. By using these words in their commonsense meanings, insight can be gained into how we have 'typically' assigned meaning to them, which may help to orient and 'bracket' some of these presuppositions.

[4]These theoretical frameworks are further complicated by the fact that theory (perspective) and methodology (how) are not always related in the same way. For example some people may adopt the same theory and methodology, but interrelate these in different ways. It is really the sum total, or 'world view' of this that determines the final results.

[5]It should be noted that many of these perspectives overlap in their attempts to explain and understand behavior. This is due to several reasons, generally methodological in nature: the difficulty of studying only environmental factors without considering certain other factors; and the purpose of the research, which often necessitates overlap of various disciplines in order to better understand/or explain an event or situation.

underlying each of these dominant approaches will be critiqued and the gaps in our current body of knowledge illustrated. I will then summarize our current understanding of the literature on violence and sport, and review the current unanswered questions. In conclusion I will illustrate how this research can provide a different type of knowledge which can be utilized to fill in some of these gaps.

A. Psychological Perspectives

Within the psychological 'paradigm' or world view, the orientation or focus of research has been on determining the psychological factors that affect or 'cause' behavior. The phenomena under study, in this case violence and aggression, is generally seen as being context or situation independent. It is theorized that a correct understanding of the individual or personality factors which 'cause' violent or aggressive behavior will be generalizable to all situations. Psychology is concerned with the study of these individual differences and how they might influence behavior. Research done from this broad approach has taken many directions, depending upon the specific question asked, yet in the majority of this research the central focus is on the individual. The nature of individuals; their inherent drives and motivations; the way they react to stimuli; how their behavior changes due to fatigue, excitement, stress or anxiety; etc. are just some of the questions researchers utilizing this perspective are investigating. Many 'significant' results have been obtained from this research paradigm, unfortunately these results often contradict each other. This is partly because this approach has produced isolated research and has often not linked the results into any broad or comprehensive theoretical perspective. This research has also tended to view humans as acting the same way across many different situations, and has failed to examine the environment in which the individual was acting, as well as the way the environment might influence the individual. The result is a great deal of fragmented research which fails to provide any kind of cohesive or comprehensive explanation of behavior.

For example, a widely known theory emanating from this approach is Miller et al.,'s (1939) 'Frustration-Aggression' hypothesis. This theory has had a large impact in the domain of sport, because sport is logically conceived as a place where frustration is typically at very high levels.

This hypothesis suggests that the psychological state of being 'frustrated' produces aggressive behavior. This theory has been the focus of a large amount of research attempting to investigate and validate it's claims. Unfortunately, this theory has not survived academic criticism in the form of replicability or generalizability to other situations. For example, after exhaustively reviewing much of the frustration-aggression research Bandura (1969) notes that:

> ...when thwarted, some people become dependent and seek help and support, some display withdrawal and resignation, some experience psychosomatic dysfunctions, some seek refuge in drug induced experiences and anaesthetic doses of alcohol, some respond aggressively, and most simply intensify constructive efforts to overcome the obstacles they face (p. 384).

Bandura is questioning the generalizability of the hypothesis. There is a large amount of subsequent data which suggests that aggression does not always follow a frustrating event. Zillmann (1979) comments on this and says:

> In summary, research on the frustration-aggression hypothesis leaves no doubt about the indefensiblilty of the original proposal that presented frustration as both a necessary and a sufficient condition for aggression. Miller's revision may have made the hypothesis defensible, but it also made it quite unworkable as a predictive notion (p. 138).

Miller's revision attempted to reconcile the frustration aggression theory with new data. He stated that frustration produces instigation to various behaviors, aggression being one of several possible courses of action that may result after a frustration is experienced. This typical response involves altering the theory to fit new data, and as Zillmann notes, this demolishes the predictive ability of the theory.

The frustration aggression hypothesis has been modified and altered to such an extent that it is virtually unrecognizable as a predictor of aggressive behavior. It is now seldom suggested as a possible cause or mediating factor in aggressive behavior, except when included within some broader theory or more complex conceptual framework. For example Bandura includes the frustration aggression hypothesis within his social learning theory of aggression. He postulates that frustration is one of many instigating factors that may lead to aggression, providing the individual has learned to aggress following frustrating incidences. Bandura concentrates his research on how one learns to label instigating incidences as 'frustrating' and how one learns to respond aggressively following frustrating incidences.

Another research effort arising out of the psychological perspective is an attempt to define a 'violent personality' or specific personality traits of violent individuals. This approach to explaining violent/aggressive behavior has developed because of the world view promoted by this perspective. This involves conceiving of humans as possessing stable personality traits which influence behavior in varying degrees, depending on the strength of the particular trait(s) they possess. Many researchers have attempted to describe a violent personality profile, but with little success.

For example, Dengerink (1976) extensively reviews much research which examines the relationship between personality variables and violent behavior. His remarks clearly illustrate the failure of this research to arrive at conclusive results:

> It is difficult to come to clear-cut conclusions regarding the effect of personality variables on aggressive behavior. When studying the evasive effects of mediating processes on aggression, one is faced with conflicting evidence from different studies and with studies that do not provide sufficient data to state flatly that variations in aggression are caused by variations in the mediators under investigation (p. 93).

Holtzman (1964) supports this conclusion in his review of the dilemmas involved in personality assessment. He discusses six major problems he perceives with personality assessment and notes that these have been recognized, albeit in a different form, by researchers working in the field twenty five years before him. He notes these unresolved issues as including: 1.The meaning of personality assessment; 2.How many things must be known about an individual to understand their personality; 3.How personality variance can be seperated from method variance; 4.Whether we are building a culture bound theory and technique of assessment; 5. Whether we can ever develop a systematic, comprehensive personality theory closely linked with empirical data; and 6.The moral dilemmas created by personality assessment (p. 326). He concludes his review by noting that if past experience is any indication then "...we can expect most of these [problems] to be with us for a long time" (p. 334).

In a sport environment, Russel (1974) has attempted to investigate certain personality factors such as 'Machiavellianism' and 'Locus of Control' and relate these measures to behavioral indices of aggression in ice hockey players. The conclusion Russel reaches is that

> ...the major hypothesis that individuals functioning in terms of an external locus

> of control or that those scoring high on Machiavellianism conduct themselves more aggressively in natural settings are clearly supported (p. 832).

Although on the surface this research seems to yield conclusive results, a more critical inspection shows it to suffer from several of the criticisms discussed by Holtzman (1964). He suggested that one of the six difficulties was distinguishing between personality variance and method variance. He further notes that multi-method experiments are useful to illustrate the extent to which personality variance is really due to the method used, rather than actual trait variance. Yet the research by Russel does not employ this safeguard. Thus an alternative interpretation of his results is that they are due to methodological 'biases'. Holtzman further notes that a theory of personality assessment may suffer from cultural restrictions, partly due to a failure to develop cross-cultural comparative studies, and a reliance upon verbally loaded instruments, which are difficult to translate to other cultures. Russel's research makes use of several scales and questionnaires as ways of assessing the personality traits of Machiavellianism and Internal/External Locus of Control. According to Holtzman, this research could suffer from cultural artifacts, and not really indicate the strong relationship Russell proposes.

A further critique of Russel's research is provided by Alderman (1974), who suggests that the failure to explicate the personality traits associated with violent and aggressive behavior is a result of the method utilized by researchers. He notes that it is the 'approach' that has failed to provide us with much worthwhile information, because researchers have not understood the nature of an individual's personality. He comments on this:

> Such an approach is completely inadequate, because it fails to take into account traits which are either dynamic or structural in nature, and it fails to include the manner in which these traits are organized and integrated into a functioning whole. . . . Although the nature of scientific analysis necessitates the investigation of discrete variables in controlled situations, an understanding of the total "picture" is necessary for this information to be of any practical use. . . . The segmentation of behavior and personality is valuable only when the perspective is broad enough to account for indirectly and directly related factors such as one's environment, one's characteristic behavior, and one's relationships with other people (pp. 110 and 126).

We can conclude from the currently available research that too much segmentation of behavior and personality has occurred, and that the 'total picture' has not been completely understood. Russel's research is an example of this, in which Machiavellianism is theorized to be: a stable personality trait across many different situations, static, and segmented

from other personality variables.

There are many other questions and gaps in the research that this perspective has not answered. For example: Does sport provide a place to release aggression, or a place to learn to control it? Is sport a place to learn aggressive behavior? Are there any individual differences that might predispose certain persons to behave more or less aggressively? What are they and how do they influence behavior?

As noted, this review is not exhaustive of the literature available, but it is representative. This research generally attempts to explain violence as a context independent event, capable of being generalized to many different situations once the specific combination of individual factors are isolated. The results of this research are fragmented and don't fit into an overall cohesive framework, because no broad general theory has guided these attempts. The results are ambiguous and inconclusive, partly because the data have been derived from a number of competing hypothesis. Russel (1981) comments on this and notes:

> ...a common weakness of many studies is the failure of investigators to make more than token gestures in the direction of relevant theories. Too often, passing reference is made to theoretical predictions which are only weakly supported by the experimental literature or to original formulations that underwent major revisions sometime ago (p. 6).

As well, this research approach is not situation specific enough for the type of event being studied. This is because the perspective which has been used to guide this research has not accurately developed out of the 'reality' of the event being studied. The method has been 'placed upon' the behavior to be studied rather than arising from a preliminary analysis of the phenomena.

B. Sociological Perspectives

Research done from within the sociological paradigm has concentrated on explaining or understanding the environmental factors which are theorized to influence or predispose individuals to engage in violent or aggressive behavior. This approach generally involves observation of the elements in the environment which are theorized to affect behavior. Factors which seem to be conceptually related to violent or aggressive behavior are observed in some way and then usually correlated to actual incidences of this behavior.

This research occurs at several levels of abstraction from the phenomena.[6] For example, at the higher level of abstraction sociologists discuss very large and complex environmental influences such as the economic institutions in society, the type of work people engage in, the educational system, the family structure, etc., and how these affect individuals to cause a certain kind of behavior. An example of this type of research applied to sport violence has been done by Taylor (1971) and Heinlia (1966). Taylor examines the institutional factors that may influence soccer hooliganism while Heinlia discusses the nature of 'modern day' sport and how this could create an environment in which violence is likely to occur.

Research examining factors and influences that are less abstract and more 'concrete' has been done by Vaz (1982, 1974, 1972) and Smith (1983, 1979, 1974). Their research centers on specific interpersonal influences such as reference other, media influence, and the values and attitudes towards violence and aggression that hockey players are exposed to through participation in hockey. Generally the research by Vaz and Smith attempts to relate these types of factors to the aggressive and violent behavior of the hockey players studied.

At the more 'concrete' level of abstraction there is much research that examines the social structure of hockey and relates this to the presence of violent behavior. This research has yielded similar conclusions, and suggests that the social structure of hockey tends to 'cause' players to engage in violent behavior. Coaches and peers reward this behavior; parents, coaches and the media teach it; and the social structure of sport legitimizes it. Gibson, (1975) Smith, and Vaz detail the 'roles' of 'goon' or 'policeman' that influence behavior; the influence of referent others; the way aggressive behavior is taught and rewarded; and the nature of the social structure that develops to create, maintain, and legitimize these types of influences.

Research done from a more abstract perspective also concludes that it is the environmental factors that predispose players to violent behavior. Taylor (1971) suggests that it is the economic disparity and resulting loss of autonomy of low income people

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[6]This distinction according to how abstract or concrete the research is can be made within the psychological perspective. However, since the approach of the majority of psychological research is measurement/experiment oriented, most of this research is abstract to a similar degree, and therefore this distinction does not prove a usefull one to dwell on.

which causes them to become violent. Their violence is an attempt to regain control over one aspect of their lives, i.e., their sport. Heinlia (1966) suggests that sport mirrors the larger society, and that violence in sport reflects the violence present in the larger society.

This extensive literature generally supports the claim that the environment, or 'forces' within the environment, cause people to be violent. Despite this, there are several questions that remain unanswered. The main question pertains to the selective influence these social forces seem to have. Not all individuals fight to the same degree; in fact there is a marked difference in violent and aggressive behavior across hockey players. This perspective does not account for any individual factors which might coact with these social influences so that behavior is influenced selectively. Research from this perspective either makes the incorrect assumption that all individuals are influenced to the same degree by these environmental factors, or it ignores this question entirely, leaving it for other approaches to answer.

A second question is how these social structures influence the players. This research postulates and measures the 'existence' of certain structural influences, yet it provides little concrete data on how these influences actually affect the players. Typically this research operationalizes the existence of one or more social influences and then measures their presence; and in this case significance (and often cause) is claimed when 'correlation' is high. Yet there is little more than correlative evidence to support these claims. This evidence does not explain how these environmental factors cause or influence behavior, it simply shows that they seem to be related.

A further question can be raised at a higher level of abstraction. This addresses the assumption of a 'cause' of behavior. For example, the above perspective describes some structural influences and then assumes these 'cause' behavior. The research suggests that these factors create an 'atmosphere' in which violent and aggressive play are more likely to occur. However, an alternative interpretation might note that violent aggressive behavior is instrumental in the creation of a social system where these structural influences exist. This interpretation suggests that the social system may be created afterwards to legitimate and make sense of one's behavior,[1] and may thereby become an

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[1] In a similar way that one's conscious verbal awareness of one's subjective experiences helps one to know oneself. See Berger and Luckman (1966) p. 38 for an elaboration of this point.

objective 'reality'. This point is in accordance with the theory of a socially constructed reality,[8] and poses the question: 'Does behavior create the social system, or does the social system create or cause the behavior?' Perhaps there is some other as yet unobserved 'cause' of this behavior and the structural factors that have been observed are actually created after the behavior. This idea is given support by the fact that self-selection into the sub-culture of hockey violence has been observed by Smith (1983) and Vaz (1982). Some other process could be present that 'causes' this behavior,[9] with the structural factors developing afterwords to create and maintain this behavior as outlined by Berger and Luckman. The research which has currently been done is generally descriptive in nature, and does not address itself to how these social structures may have developed.

Finally, what the experience of being influenced by these environmental 'forces' is like is not known. Research by Taylor (1971), Marsh et al., (1978a, 1978b), Faulkner (1973, 1974), Smith (1983) and Vaz (1982) has demonstrated the existence of influential factors such as 'roles' or 'rules' that direct behavior; values and attitudes that guide one's behavior; or in the case of Taylor, 'alienation' that predisposes people to violent and aggressive behavior; yet in all of these there is no evidence provided to support the notion that 'alienation' or social 'rules' or 'roles' or 'informal control systems' are what the subject is actually 'experiencing'.[10] These conceptual notions are theory laden and have been placed on the observations by researchers, as opposed to arising from the data. Most research has not attempted to find out what it may be like to experience these things, i.e., to be 'influenced' by 'social rules' or 'roles'. Is this a form of control the subjects are aware of? Do they 'experience' the role as something that influences them, or is this an unconscious type of influence? This perspective has not, as yet, addressed this question.

In summary, despite the greater amount of research from within this perspective which provides evidence for these conclusions (compared to the psychological research)

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[8]See Berger and Luckman, (1966) ch. 3.
[9]For example, a self-selection bias could be postulated as a cause of the development of an environment in which aggression and violence were highly valued.
[10]Despite these different labels, the research is generally in agreement that the environmental factors are more influential and prevalent in 'affecting' violent and aggressive behavior than are the individual factors (see Baron, (1977) ch. 4 for a discussion of this point).

there are still many unanswered questions. For example, there is still no research which attempts to describe the experience of fighting from the point of view of the participant. Similarily there is very little research which has been done which describes or attempts to understand how the many environmental factors influence behavior so that certain individuals behave aggressively and violently while others do not. Finally, there is little evidence which helps to understand what it might be like to be influenced by these social structures; i.e., the rules, roles, and norms which (theoretically) guide and direct behavior in hockey violence.

C. Social/Psychological Perspectives

Social psychology is a combination of the sociological perspective and the psychological perspective. It is the study of the way in which individuals are affected by social situations. Because fighting is generally conceived to be a social act, that is, one that does not occur in a vacuum but rather in the social world, most of the research which has been done on violence, particularily hockey violence, has adopted this perspective. Russell (1981) and Hill (1983) review much of this research, however their conclusions are not very enlightening. This is because this approach suffers from many of the same failings as its 'parent' disciplines of sociology and psychology. These reviews provide good examples of the fragmented nature of much of this research, and show quite clearly that the results do not fall into a comprehensive or cohesive body of knowledge.

The most comprehensive theory that has developed from this perspective is Bandura's (1979, 1973) 'social learning' hypothesis. This theory, which suggests that the acquisition and performance of aggressive behavior occurs through a process of social learning, has been reviewed extensively by Hill (1983) and will not be discussed here. As I noted, much of the research which has been done by Faulkner (1973, 1974), Gibson (1975), Smith (1983), Thompson (1977), and Vaz (1982) can be understood within this broader theory of social learning. These researchers provided consistent and conclusive evidence which supports Bandura's theory.

However, as with all theories which provide many answers, this theory also raises many questions. For example, Bandura suggests that much of social learning takes place through modelling, yet he fails to suggest where the 'original model' comes from. If

humans learn their aggressive tendencies from modelling others, then there must be an original model or prototype from which humans could copy. This is one flaw which Bandura does not address. Another question which can be raised is why such behavior is reinforced. Bandura suggests that reinforcement of aggressive behavior is one of the main reasons for its reoccurrence, yet he provides no rationale to explain why this type of behavior is reinforced. If fighting and aggression are negatively valued by society, why is it obviously rewared in many situations, including hockey? Finally, Bandura's theory does not discuss in specific terms the individual differences which affect the way these aggressive behaviors are learned. He briefly comments that individual differences do play an important part in the way these behaviors are learned, but he does not discuss what these issues are, concentrating instead on the factors within the environment that influence the learning of these aggressive behaviors. These are important questions, as discussed in the sociological perspectives section, and we need to ask how these individual factors affect the learning of aggressive behavior.

D. Anthropological/Ethological Perspectives

Anthropology refers to "...the study of [hu]man[s],... especially in relation to race, environmental and social relations and culture." (Websters, 1977, p. 49). Ethology is "...the scientific and objective study of animal behavior." (Websters, 1977, p. 393). Since humans are also animals, and violent behavior is one of the few types of behaviors that range across nearly all cultures and animal kingdoms, it is no surprise to learn that these perspectives have been extensively used to research this phenomena.

This theoretical approach conceives of humans as animals, albeit more intelligent and complex than most other animals. Violence and aggression are theorized to be an inherent behavior in animals, including humans. Extensive use of analogies, particularly between animals and humans, and between different cultures or situations, are made within this perspective. Field and laboratory work, most involving observation, are the main methods of collecting data. Conclusions which result from these observations are often made generalizable to all animals, and in the area of violence and aggression this includes humans. As this research is examined, the questions this perspective has not addressed will become clear.

The thesis that humans derive their aggressive violent tendencies from their ancestral origins has been expressed by many researchers in the field. Washburn et al., (1968) note

> ...until recently war was viewed in much the same way as hunting. Other human beings were simply the most dangerous game. War has been far too important in human history for it to be other than pleasurable for the males involved (p. 155).

They further note that our biological roots can be measured by biology. Morris (1967) expresses a similar sentiment, in a more popular vein:

> If we are to understand the nature of our aggressive urges we must see them against the background of our animal origins.... Animals fight amongst each other for one of two very good reasons: either to establish their dominance in a social hierarchy, or to establish their territorial rights over a particular piece of ground (p. 128).

Morris then goes on to suggest these two reasons for violence can be observed in humans, and that establishing dominance or territorial rights are the two causes of self-assertion that lead to violence and aggression in humans.

This research, as well as other research which has been done from within this perspective, has been reviewed and critiqued in detail by several people, including Berkowitz (1969), Montague (1968) and most extensively by Fromm (1973). Several questions have been raised. Fromm notes that there is no concrete evidence in neuropsychology that supports the notion of an instinctual drive to aggress. He suggests that an instinctive drive to 'flight' is as valid a conclusion to draw from the available evidence as is an instinctive drive to fight, because both of these 'drives' are linked to one's neuropsychological makeup (Fromm, 1973 pp. 119-121).

Fromm further critiques a vast literature of anthropological research on animals and notes there are many conflicting results. The evidence seems to suggest that animals in captivity fight due to the overcrowding often present in these situations, while the research in field settings does not indicate that animals living in the wild are necessarily aggressive or violent to members of their own species. He notes:

> ...there are a number of recent studies of animals living in the wild which clearly show that the aggressiveness to be observed under conditions of captivity is not present when the same animals live in their natural habitat (p. 133).

A review of the literature on primitive and prehistoric cultures by Fromm provides further evidence to refute the claim that there is an instinctive drive to aggress and/or that this drive is linked to our biological heritage. He notes:

> The anthropological data have demonstrated that the instinctivistic interpretation of human destructiveness is not tenable. . . . destructiveness and cruelty are minimal in so many societies that these great differences could not be explained if we were dealing with an innate passion (p. 204).

He suggests instead that violence and aggression (except to defend oneself) occur as a result of one's character, which is rooted in and developed through interaction with one's society, as opposed to instinctively rooted in one's biology.

This 'instinctive' approach to aggressive behavior has led to the catharsis theory of aggression in sport. Catharsis is the notion that aggression is innate in individuals and that sport provides a natural outlet or release for these instinctive tendencies. This theoretical approach suggests that behavior such as sports, competition and aggressive displays, either lived through or vicariously experienced, can serve as a release for this aggressive 'energy', and thereby lower one's drive to aggress in the future (until the 'energy' builds up again). This theory has been critiqued exhaustively, and, like the frustration aggression hypothesis, is no longer accepted as a valid theory in its original form.[11]

An example of research within sports which stems from this instinctive theory of aggression has been done by Marsh (1978). He observes that within the animal kingdom most intraspecies aggression takes the form of 'ritualized' aggression, which rarely results in serious injury or death. Following this he attempts to generalize his conclusions to humans. Using soccer hooliganism as an example, Marsh notes that people are rarely hurt seriously in these situations, despite the apparent prevalence of this type of behavior. This he calls 'the illusion of violence', which he clarifies as:

> Aggression can be channelled; via the construction of certain social frameworks, into patterns of activity which pose only an illusory threat to the development and maintenance of what we take to be civilization (p. 114).

Marsh is suggesting that we create situations so that if violence occurs, it occurs according to socially constructed norms and rules. These rules act to 'control' such behavior so that the real violence, where people are seriously hurt or killed, is decreased.

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[11]See Berkowitz, (1962, 1970) and Quanty, (1976) for a discussion of this theory and it's failings.

A ritualized type of non-violent behavior is prescribed by these rules for the purpose of preserving the species.

The confusing part of this theory is how violent behavior in which people do get hurt (i.e., murder, muggings, rape, etc.) is explained. Marsh neatly steps around this dilemma by stating that this is a 'different kind' of violence. He suggests that though some (accidental) deaths may result from ritualized aggression, this is a different type of killing (because it is socially controlled) than the killing of people that occurs in 'real' violent situations. Despite Marsh's rationale for adopting such a stance, one is left wondering. One wonders about the 'real world', and whether there is any evidence in the 'real world' to support this theory, for example what fighting or violence in these different situations is like for the persons involved. Is it different for the person, depending on whether he is involved in ritualized or real violence?[12]

One also wonders whether the reason Marsh provides to explain why there are rules and norms influencing this behavior (which he derives from his ethological perspective) is really the correct reason. That there are certain structures and/or rules which influence behavior in these situations is not in doubt, as this observation has been made by numerous researchers approaching this phenomena from a variety of different perspectives. What is questioned is the analogy made from ethological work on animals to humans, i.e., that the reason these rules are constructed is to 'preserve the species'. This may be a function of these rules, but is it a latent or a manifest function? Marsh would propose that this is a manifest function, based on his work with animals. Is this conclusion the correct one?

Taylor (1971) suggests not. He has observed these same types of 'controls' in the form of rules and norms, but has utilized a different explanation to understand them. He notes:

> The pitch invasions and the violence around the grounds and on soccer trains are more in the nature of a drift in the direction of attempts to reassert traditional control. The means for asserting this control have changed as the options available for the democratic and regulated participation in the club have closed (p. 158).

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[12]A similar question arises from within the traditional psychological paradigm when the many different 'types' of aggression are discussed. For example, is 'instrumental' aggression different from 'goal' aggression *for the person who is experiencing these behaviors?* There has not been, to my knowledge, any research which attempts to address either of these two definitional questions.

Taylor believes that as control of the sport of soccer has slipped from soccer fans they have tried to reassert their identity and control over the soccer milieu. Violence of the sort present in soccer crowds reflects this desire for control and identity in a society where working class soccer fans have become increasingly alienated. The existing rules and norms reflect this need for a reality where the fans are again in control.[13] One might suggest that all reality is socially created. If so, the question then becomes: 'For what purpose?' Taylor is observing similar phenomena and arriving at different conclusions (based on a different world view). Who is right?

E. Methodological Perspectives

The previous section reviewed the major theoretical perspectives that have been used to explain sports violence, and noted that as a result of these different approaches there are many unanswered questions. These unanswered questions are present because of the influence these theoretical perspectives have on the research process. The purpose of this section is to review the major methodologies that have been utilized within these theoretical perspectives and discuss how these methodologies have also influenced the research process. This critique will address the question of how the 'data' were collected and analyzed, focussing on the actual research process and illustrating how particular methodologies have influenced the results.

Traditionally, research from within the social sciences has been categorized within either the quantitative or the qualitative methodology, although there are some very diverse methodologies subsumed under each of these two broad headings. These categories are present across all of the perspectives discussed above, although their distinct application within each perspective may vary somewhat.

The quantitative methodology derives its origins from the empiricism of the natural sciences. This empiricism places an emphasis on observable behavior. It accepts for data only what can be measured and thereafter validated by others. The focus of this research is on providing 'valid' and 'provable' knowledge about the social world in the form of factual information about people, what they do and why they do it. Whitson (1978) reviews and contrasts the views of positivism (the quantitative methodology) with

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[13]See Marsh et al.,(1978a) for an excellent study on the nature of the 'reality' and of the 'roles' created in the subculture of soccer rowdies.

qualitative methods, which he calls critical sociology. His comments could justifiably be applied to psychology as well as sociology:

> Positivism, as we have suggested, holds that only evidence which is available to the senses in object form can settle disputes conclusively. Thus a positivist approach to sociology attends only to objective or externally available features of human life... (p. 11).

This methodology has been critiqued because of its failure to produce results which are not contradictory. Often the literature from this methodology consists of 'tallies' of the number of studies in support of a particular issue vs. the number of studies against the issue (though to be sure the 'name' of the authors producing the research is also a factor to be considered). The 'conclusion' derived from this type of review is usually a reflection of the bias of the researcher as well as of the quality and preciseness of the research. One reason for these incongruent results lies in the many and varied behaviors that have been operationalized and therefore theorized to represent the underlying trait in question (i.e., aggression). Geen (1976) notes:

> Little of the massive amount of research that has been done on aggression has been addressed to a search for valid dependent measures, . . . The more common practice is to adopt an operational definition of aggression...and to attempt to show that such measures are systematically related to antecedant variables in a way stated in some hypothesis. *The dependent measures themselves most often have face validity and little else* (p. 2, emphasis added).

Aggressive behavior, and some of its theorized antecedants, have been operationalized in an attempt by this methodology to maintain 'objective' measurements. Unfortunately, objectivity in this case has meant a sacrifice of validity. The results have been determined to be 'significant', yet it is often unclear what is really being measured.

This critique clearly applies to the sport and aggression literature as Russel (1981) notes:

> ...the indiscriminate use of measures specifically developed for the assessment of clinical populations would seem ill advised without evidence of their validity in sport settings (p. 4).

Because of the lack of a clear-cut definition of aggression, and of aggressive behavior, as an 'empirically' observable event/situation, and the demand by this methodology to attend to only externally verifiable features, researchers have developed different ways of operationalizing these events, in order to produce 'objective' results. Unfortunately,

because of the diverse ways these traits have been operationalized, it has become very difficult to arrive at any clear conclusions.

The research done from the sociological perspective has tended to apply the methods of the quantitative approach in a somewhat different way, placing less emphasis on laboratory and experimental research and more on observation and measurement of environmental influences and situations. Despite this difference the criticisms discussed above still apply to this perspective. However some of the research which has examined the environmental influences on hockey violence has utilized multiple methods, which serves to balance out the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. As Smith (1979) notes:

> The use of multiple research operations, or 'triangulation', in the fullest sense of the word...strengthens internal and external validity....Combining survey and participant observation operations, in particular, allows the strengths of one to compensate for the weaknesses of the other. Especially, it forces the analyst to deal with the problem of researchers' definitions not squaring with those of participants, *particularly troublesome in dealing with events not often, or never, experienced firsthand by those who seek to explain them* (p.109, emphasis added).

Smith is suggesting that a combination of methods can provide one with a subjective understanding of the objective measures which have been made. This understanding is essential to the correct interpretation and analysis of the objective data. The conclusions derived from this body of research have been used as a starting point for this study.

The research which has been done from an anthropological perspective has also suffered from the problems attributed above to a positivist methodology, but not nearly as much. This methodology has been based more on observations than on measurement of phenomena. Case study research abounds in the literature. The problem here lies not in how these observations were made, but in the generalizations that were developed from these observations and the extrapolations made to other similar phenomena. In Fromm's (1973) review of this research he makes this point clear. He suggests that an inaccurate interpretation of results from a few studies, some done while the animals were in captivity and hence aggressive levels were much higher than normal, has led to the popularized notion that animals behave aggressively towards members of their own species. These studies are then cited and an extrapolation is made which concludes that humans are also inherently violent and aggressive. Fromm challenges not only the extrapolation, but also

the underlying observations that animals are inherently savage and violent. He cites research which indicates that animals in their natural habitat are not nearly as aggressive as previously thought. He suggests that the reason for the conflicting conclusion lies in weak generalizations stemming from weak underlying research.

F. Literature Review: Summary

The previous chapter has discussed in a critical way some current research dealing with violence and aggression, particularly that directed toward violence and aggression in sports. I have reviewed this research in terms of the main theoretical perspectives and the major methodologies utilized. This summary will highlight some unanswered questions present in this body of knowledge.

Much of the research was quantitative in methodology, and focussed on one element of our psycho-social system as a unit of study, at the exclusion of others. The quantitative methodology has led to a research process that is very abstracted from the 'data', mainly in order to be objective; while the theoretical perspective has generally failed to synthesize all of the factors that affect behavior. The result is that much of this research has produced 'fragmented' results. This stems from the diverse ways of conducting research, and the lack of a comprehensive and unitary theoretical perspective.

A wholistic perspective has been lacking, and thus the interrelatedness of the phenomena being studied has not been adequately appreciated. For example, is the experience of aggression different from other similar experiences, such as competition? Is it different from violence? Are competition and violence related? What are these phenomena like to experience? Is fighting different from a hard body check in hockey, or a hard tackle in football? Does aggression necessarily increase as competition does? Is fighting in a hockey game experientially different than in a bar? In a boxing ring? Is instrumental aggression different than goal aggression, for the person engaging in them?

From an environmental approach, as discussed above in the sociological perspectives section, one can ask what the process of being influenced by this environment is like. Is this something people are aware of? Is it something people consciously chose to accept or reject? Perhaps the environment does not influence behavior as this theoretical perspective suggests. Perhaps it is more a reflection of the

behavior of the persons who are actively involved in creating and maintaining this social system. Despite these contrary intreprations, one can ask what this process of interaction between the environment and the individual is like to experience.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The methodology utilized in phenomenological research is very different from that of other research approaches. It uses no statistical or quantitative analysis. Instead it involves a qualitative discriptive approach that is oriented toward providing the reader with an understanding of the experience being examined. 'Data' can be gathered from a variety of sources, including direct experiences of the phenomena by the researcher, discussions with others who have had similar direct experiences, and examination of literature and other accounts which give information about the phenomena under investigation. The main criteria used in data collection is that the data must help the researcher to understand what it is like to experience the phenomena under investigation. In the case of this research, data collection was predominantly gathered from informants who played hockey and who had been involved in hockey fights.

A. Informants

This research involved players from the University of Alberta Hockey team. Fifteen players were interviewed, while the whole team was used for the 'participant observation' aspect of the research. Most of the players had been involved in junior hockey, and a substantial amount of data collected was recalled from their junior hockey involvement. Thus the results of this research will be generalizable to both university and junior hockey populations. The results will not be generalizable to other possible populations, such as professional or minor league hockey.

B. Data Collection:

Two types of data have been collected for this research. One type, derived from field research, entailed observation of the subjects while they participated in the social world of hockey. The data consisted of written notes, compiled before and after practices and games during the 1984-1985 University men's hockey season. These data were collected two-three times per week from November to March, 1985. Comments, impressions and observations about the social world of hockey were collected during this phase of the research. The main thrust of this method was to collect information on the attitudes and values, norms and feelings towards the 'experience' of fighting that were

present within the sub-culture of hockey and on the characteristics and personalities of the players involved in this study. The data were used for two purposes: to provide background information about the players and their environment; and to help in the analysis of the interviews that took place during the latter phase of the research.[14]

The second type of data consisted of information gathered during unstructured interviews held with specific players. The informants were interviewed in order to obtain detailed information about the experience of fighting in hockey. This information was collected on a tape recorder, and was obtained in private interviews conducted away from the hockey 'scene'. The average interview lasted about one hour and fifteen minutes. Each subject was interviewed only once, but three subjects, who were particularly useful, were interviewed twice.

C. Structure of Interviews:

During the initial part of the interview some demographic and historical data such as age, hockey background and family and personal background data were collected. As well, the confidentiality of all information collected was explained to the subject. Combined with the field research, this brief introduction was a useful 'ice-breaker' during the initial phase of the interviews.

After this, a set of general questions[15] was used to introduce the area to be investigated, following which the interviews took a totally unstructured format as the topic of fighting in hockey was probed and discussed in more detail. When discussion on a particular theme had been exhausted, or no new information was forthcoming, a new question was used to initiate detailed discussion about another area of interest.

The exact nature of the questions were not developed in advance. Rather the previous pilot study and the literature review provided information on various themes. These themes were explored during the conversations, as well as the many new themes that the players mentioned.

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[14]Marsh et al., (1978b) note that an understanding of the values and norms of the social actors developed from these kinds of observations provides for a more accurate data analysis.

[15]This set of introductory questions was derived from a previously conducted pilot study.

The main question which guided the researcher was "What is it like to get into a fight in hockey?" As players responded to this initial general query notes were briefly made, and these responses were then investigated in more detail. This general query provided a wealth of information to be explored, and the theme questions were utilized when these avenues were exhausted.

D. Data Analysis:

The data analysis proceeded in the manner described by Barritt et al., (1984), Colaizzi (1978), Turner (1981), and van Manen (1984). These researchers describe a method of analyzing the descriptions and reports of behavior provided by people who have engaged in this behavior. This analysis attempts to provide a more complete understanding of the subjective experience of the person who is engaging in it. It consists of techniques and methods described by the above researchers, which has as its purpose the explication and description of the 'lived experience' of getting into fights. van Manen (1978) notes that the attempt is to "...break through the surface of everyday utterances, actions and interactions to the structures which are embedded on deeper levels" (p. 47). Barritt et al., (1984) describe the goal of such analysis as "...to find common themes in the written descriptions and to find language that captures these themes, or what some prefer to call structures" (p. 5).

Turner (1981) further elaborates and discribes this data analysis as it is utilized within the qualitative research process. He discusses nine stages of data analysis, some of which were utilized in this study. The first stage is the development of categories. Labelled categories which closely fit the data are developed through a process of examining the data for elements which seem relevant to the study. Barritt et al., (1984) note some usefull criteria for categorizing data. They suggest that the researcher read each lived description with 'fresh eyes' and have no preconceived biases. The researcher allows the subjects to be the experts, and adopts the stance of novice. Elements or moments of the lived experience which 'fly up like sparks' and seem to be important aspects of the experience are grouped together according to their similarity to each other and their difference to other elements. The label that is developed must 'fit' the data, or correspond to it, and the elements of the category must be similar with respect to the category label.

In this study a system of seven by nine filing cards was utilized during the categorization process. As the data were analyzed, comments that seemed to describe or allude to or discuss a particular element of the experience of fighting in hockey were grouped together. A reference system was developed, making it possible to refer back to the original interview should this prove necessary at a later date, while a brief descriptive phrase was written on the appropriate filing card(s). Where the phrase seemed to apply to more than one category, cross referencing was utilized in order to assure that the multiple uses of these phrases were not overlooked.

The second stage discussed by Turner (1981) involves saturation of the categories. This refers to:

> ...the process of accumulating additional examples of categories until the researcher feels confident that he or she is fully aware of what is meant when any new phenomena encountered are classified into the category in question (p. 235).

This process of category saturation of necessity involved substantial alterations of the categories and of the data within the categories. Categories were frequently collapsed during this analysis when it became apparent that different descriptive cues actually referred to the same theme.

For example, initial categories included things such as 'bailing out', 'backing down', 'covering up' and 'refusing to fight'. It was soon realized that these all referred to a similar element. Bailing out and covering up were thus combined into one category representing the player's experience during a fight when he no longer wanted to fight, but was only interested in protecting himself from further pain and injury. This category is related to the elements of backing down and refusing to fight, which were also collapsed into a single category which represented a player's experience of not wanting to fight before the fight began. The relationship between these two categories was that both represented elements that pertained to not wanting to fight, or trying to avoid fights. It became apparent that these were interrelated to a host of other categories, such as being intimidated. Being intimidated was related in that players who backed down often did so because they were intimidated, and players often became intimidated through engaging in a fight in which they bailed out.

As well, at times categories were divided when it was realized that what at first appeared to be one theme was in fact two similar but different themes. An example of this can be found in the theme of 'expectations', which initially referred to the players' expectations of getting into a fight. This was subsequently expanded to include the expectation that a player brings to the game, and the expectations that arise from the game itself. As well, these expectations appeared to occur as a result of other teams, or of specific players on the other team, or one's own subjective feelings about hockey. This one thematic element was expanded into the awareness of possible fights as it appears in the section entitled 'Mental Fights' in the 'Results and Discussion' section of the thesis.

This theme was related to other themes as well. For example, players spoke of making decisions about fights and how to act in the sequence of events leading up to fights based on their expectations of possible fights. This indicated that the element of decisions, a theme in fighting, was interrelated to this expectation theme.

The process of saturating the categories of necessity required subtantial shifting and restructuring of the categories. The number of categories in existence ranged from about thirty five at the start of the analysis to as many as 130 near the end.[16] This process continued during the writing phase as new insights were gained and further analysis occurred.

The next stage of data analysis Turner describes involves developing concise abstract definitions of each of these categories. It is here that this study differs. A phenomenological analysis makes no attempt to develop abstractions—in fact it attempts to remain as concrete as possible. Thus the definitions of the categories that were developed were not abstract, but were instead descriptive in nature. van Manen (1984) notes this difference clearly:

> ...no conceptual formulation or a single statement can possible capture the full mystery of this experience. So a phenomenological theme [category label] is much less a singular statement... than an actual description of the structure of a lived experience. As such, a so-called thematic phrase...only serves to point at, or allude to, or hint at, an aspect of the phenomenon (p. 60).

In this research, the category definitions became a part of the body of the thesis. The various definitions of the elements of fighting in hockey are contained within the results

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[16]Two lists of categories are provided in Appendix One to illustrate the kinds of themes that emerged from the data, as well as to give an illustration of how some of them have changed through the course of the data analysis process.

and discussion section. As much as possible, the words and meanings of the informants were maintained, in order to preserve the experiential nature of the analysis. Thus, to understand the experiential nature of the taken for granted element of cheap shots, one can read this in the 'Events Leading Up to a Fight' section.

A subsequent stage of the data analysis process described by Turner involves noting and developing links between categories. Some of the links which emerged during the saturation process have already been discussed. These links emerged when it became clear that some of the descriptive phrases could be categorized under more than one heading. This observation lead to speculation that there might be a connection between the two (or more) categories encompassed by these phrases. When this was the case the linkages were written out in brief phrases on all relevant cards in order to cross reference them. For example, several players noted that when they had been intimidated they were a bit fearful of the person who had intimidated them. This relationship was written on both the 'fear' and 'intimidation' cards for further reference. When it was subsequently reported that players often tried to instill fear in their opponents to get them to play with less enthusiasm and desire, the exact nature of the relationship between fear and intimidation was further expanded.

Turner next discusses stages which attempt to link the data analysis to existing theories, and thus attempt to support existing or derive new theoretical relationships from the data. This differs again from a phenomenological analysis, which is intended to provide the reader with an experiential understanding of the phenomena, as opposed to an abstract or theoretical understanding. Thus the next stage in the data analysis of this research involved transforming the categories and linkages between categories into a written description that would convey the meaning of the experience of fighting in hockey in such a way that the reader could more fully understand this experience.

This writing process took place over a period of time. Throughout the data analysis phase, as linkages became apparent brief notes and explanatory paragraphs were formulated. This writing process continued and the sections became larger as the categories became saturated. Following this, sections of several pages were written as groups of linkages were connected together in experiential descriptive 'knots'. An outline began to emerge, first in the researcher's mind, and then on paper, to guide this process.

This outline was the result of a 'gestalt' process which occurred due to being continually immersed in the data for an extended period of time. The outline was focussed around answering the question: "What do I want to say about the experience of fighting in hockey?" While noting the interpretative, subjective aspect of the data analysis process, it is clear that this is not without precedent, as van Manen (1984) notes:

> A phenomenological description is always one interpretation, and no single interpretation of human experience will ever exhaust the possibility of yet another complementary, or even potentially richer, description (p. 40).

E. Pilot Study

A pilot study was undertaken in the spring of 1984. This study involved a similar format to that described above, except on a smaller scale. Four players from the U. of A. hockey team and six players from various other hockey backgrounds were interviewed during the course of this study. Notes and observations from the field portion were also collected. The data collected were used to help formulate the questions used in this research, and have been useful in determining the final direction this research would take. As well, the experience and knowledge gained have been utilized in selecting and developing the methodology used for this study.

The pilot study made the researcher aware that many players have not thought in a reflective way about their experiences while fighting in hockey. This strengthened the belief that this was a useful area to study, and that a phenomenolical approach would be a productive methodology to utilize. The pilot study was also useful in developing some interviewing and data analysis skills.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: INTRODUCTION

This examination of fights in hockey has shown that there are in fact different kinds of hockey fights. Sometimes players fight when they are extremely mad at their opponent, and sometimes they fight with more of a detached mood, i.e., because their coach told them to 'go talk to him!' Other times players fight out of a fear of getting hurt, to protect other players on their team, or to protect the team's image. It is quite likely that still other 'types' of fights may surface; this list is by no means meant to be exhaustive. These differences have generally been completely overlooked by the traditional empirical approach. [17]

These fights are not all experienced similarly for those who get into them. These differences illuminate important experiential aspects of fighting in hockey. For example, some fights involve a great deal of intensity, with players reporting a strong desire to hurt their opponent. Other fights involve less desire by the players. They don't really want to fight, but feel obliged due to situational 'pressures'. This difference helps illuminate the element of intensity that exists in fights. Some fights have more intensity, others less, but even from this lack it can be observed that intensity is an element of fighting in hockey. The differences in fighting that have been observed in this research can therefore further our understanding of the experience of fighting in hockey, both as it is lived and its essential or generic nature.

It is the intention of this research to describe the subjective experiences that players have reported from the interviews conducted with them in such a way that their true objective nature becomes manifest. The differences that exist will be of great help in coming to understand this objective experience. I shall do this by describing both the background context in which fights occur (i.e., the game of hockey) and the events that preceed and lead up to fights in hockey. Discussions with hockey players have indicated that both of these are important factors that directly influence the lived experience of fighting.

Fights are not static events without histories and precedent events. They are events with a start and a finish. Nor are they simply feelings or perceptions. They require action of the body and active intentions of the mind for them to become real. This dynamic

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[17]All references to fights or fighting will refer to the fighting event as it occurs in the hockey situation, unless stated otherwise.

and 'fluctuating event cannot be reduced to one act or behavior, and it cannot be adequately measured via the traditional empirical paradigm. Fights can be broken down into their constitutive parts, and these can be examined to illuminate certain aspects of fighting. But to understand the lived experience of fighting in hockey the whole that these parts constitute must be understood.

This whole is embedded in the game of hockey, specifically the North American game as played in Canadian universities. Fights disrupt and interfere with the game, yet fighting arises from and is considered a 'part of the game' by players. Because these events arise from within the game, an understanding of the game and how it influences fighting is essential.

The following section will describe in general the Canadian university hockey game, focussing specifically on those aspects that were observed to influence the experience of fighting in hockey. Attention has been paid throughout to the lived experience as discussed by the informants. Research from other disciplines has illuminated the apparent influence of factors such as frustration, and socio-economic or class barrier differences upon incidences of violence in sport (see literature review). These factors have been 'bracketed' and will only be included when they are clearly perceived as part of the experience by those who have lived through these experiences.

Following this section, I will describe chronologically the events occurring within the game which lead up to the disruption of the game by a fight. By explicating and describing the social world that fights occur within, the experience of fighting should be made more real as it is embedded in its true context. Successive events that constitute the process of fighting in hockey will then be elaborated and described. The experience of fighting itself will be dissected, and some essential characteristics of this experience will be discussed. It is believed that this analysis will provide a more wholistic understanding of the experiential nature of fighting in hockey for those who read it.

VI. THE GAME

A. It's part of the game

Throughout the discussions players repeatedly made this comment, i.e., that fighting in hockey was part of the game of hockey. Fighting in 'real life' is usually viewed negatively. People who get into fights in 'real life' are usually labelled as thugs or bullies. Hockey players are well aware of this. One player commented that he tried hard not to let his on-ice behavior as a hockey enforcer carry over to his off-ice behavior. The response that 'it's part of the game' was the result of this knowledge, and stemmed from the players' expectation that their behavior would be evaluated in light of the negative values that exist in 'real life'.

Players link fighting to the game of hockey in an effort to justify behavior that many admitted would be unacceptable and negatively viewed, even to them, should it occur in 'real life'. The game of hockey is viewed as a separate reality, a world distinct from 'real life'. This separate reality involves different values towards fighting. In hockey, fighting is viewed positively. A substantial body of research shows that players are strongly and consistently reinforced for this behavior, both by peers and by the social institution of hockey (Vaz, 1982; Smith, 1983; Faulkner, 1974). The phrase 'It's part of the game' is an attempt to rationalize the dissonance between these positive values and the negative societal values. Players want to believe that fighting in hockey is different. To achieve this they construct their reality so that fighting is seen as 'part of the game'. The implication is that fighting in hockey ought to be judged in light of these values—as opposed to the more critical values existing in society.

Fights in hockey, and the acts leading up to these fights, acquire their meanings for the players within the context of the game. It is of little help to try to understand this phenomena from an external observers perspective, particularly especially one who has not understood this context. The game affects players in a variety of ways. It provides definitions of how players should interpret the behavior of others, and how they should respond to that behavior. It provides 'roles' that players can conform to, that are often different from their off ice roles. It also provides the feelings that players live through. These feelings result from the players' involvement in the game. All of these influence the

experience of fighting in hockey. Because players' understandings and experiences are filtered through the game context, both the meanings and the feelings of hockey will need to be considered in order to adequately understand the experience of fighting as it occurs in hockey. The next sections will describe in more detail the various aspects of the game that have been discussed as influential factors upon the experience of fighting in hockey.

B. Concentration

> *...you're not worried about what Mom and Dad are thinking about in the stands. You have a task in front of you, and your completely involved in that.*[11]

The game of hockey draws the participant into its separate and distinct reality. When played with abandon, the game is totally engrossing. It focusses one's attention. Players get into the game so much that things from 'real life' fade from their mind. These things do not belong in the reality of hockey. They are distractions that detract from one's immersion in and enjoyment of the game. They can also decrease one's performance. If a player is not concentrating totally on the game, he will not play as effectively as he otherwise would. For example, players usually do not notice the crowd when playing. They do when they stop to listen to it, but when playing, they focus on the game. Players noted that even advice and commands from the coach were seldom heard when they were on the ice. Fatigue and pain are often not noticed during the game.

Not all hockey games involve this focussed concentration. There are some games where the outcome might be decided early, i.e., from one team running up a lopsided score. Or, a game might be totally irrelevant to the outcome of the league standings. In these situations players may not be playing as hard, and they may not be concentrating as intensely. They are often not 'into' these games as much, i.e., their interest and attention is not wholly occupied by the game. In this case, other things (like what one's parents are thinking about) may be on their minds.

This concentration and focussing of one's attention on the game begins well before the actual start of the game. For some it might occur in the dressing room while

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[11]All comments contained in this thesis in *italics* have been taken from the transcribed interviews with the players used in this research.

getting changed. Others reported thinking about it two or three days or more in advance of the actual game. This thinking involves an anticipatory 'living' of the game, where the expected feelings and experiences of the game are mentally lived through by the player. These occur sporadically, and increase in frequency and duration as the game approaches. As the game gets closer these thoughts dominate the person's attention and awareness (university players who managed to study the morning before a game were rare).

This focussing of attention is at its greatest when the player is on the ice, and it receeds somewhat when he is on the bench. During these periods of decreased concentration strategy and tactics can be discussed and planned. The player is more able to reflect upon and monitor his play. He can plan his moves and maneuvers here, so that when he gets on the ice again he will perform them adequately. This reflexivity is seldom possible during the game because of the focussed concentration required for proper performance. During the game players typically respond with the most dominant response in their repertoire. They don't consciously decide, but respond automatically.

Players are still 'in the game' when it's over. Certain extraordinary plays that 'stuck in one's mind' are re-lived and re-experienced, similar to the way they were pre-experienced before the game. It takes some time before the lived reality of the hockey game is completely gone and replaced by the more pervasive 'paramount reality' of our everyday lives.

C. Rules

> *Oh a lot of times say in that instance, when that defenceman just gave you a shot just for the sake of.... ok, its kind of a code... cause its kind of a code: "Don't do it again."*

The above quote refers to a code which defines appropriate behavior and helps players know how to interpret the behavior of others. This code may be likened to an informal rule of hockey that has been inculcated by the players. Vaz (1982, ch. 5) notes that there exist in hockey both formal and informal systems that control the behavior of players by proscribing how to act in certain situations.

The formal system includes all of the rules of hockey, including the objectives and meanings that are needed to 'create' the alternative reality of the game. These formal rules structure the game and define how to behave within this alternative reality. Without these

rules the game of hockey would not be possible.

There also exist in hockey informal rules, or as Vaz (1982) calls them, an informal control system. These further specify, within the boundaries of the formal rules, how players are to behave in certain situations. For example, the formal rules do not tell a player how to react when another player spears or elbows him. They specify a penalty if the player is seen by the referees, but they do not specify how one player ought to respond in this situation. It is here that the informal rules are utilized to help players determine the correct response. Both types of rules exist within hockey, although Vaz suggests it is the informal ones which receive the most support and have the most impact, both with the players and the other members of the hockey culture, including coaches, fans, and referees.

These informal rules dominate because the enforcement of the formal rules often occurs quite inconsistently. Dave Schultz (1982) suggested this is partly due to the fast pace of the game, and the difficulty one referee has in watching twelve players who are skating at high speeds at the same time. Dryden (1983) further suggested that the referees are given a degree of 'license' in the way they enforce these rules. He noted that in baseball there is minimal room for error in an umpire's calls, whereas hockey provides far greater room for the random assessment of penalties. He likens hockey refereeing to conducting arbitrary spot-checks on New Years Eve and notes that "anything signalled is bound to be an infraction" (p. 197). Subjects in this study also observed that there is a great deal of behavior against the formal rules that does not get penalized. The referees don't penalize these infractions because of their orientation. Dryden describes this orientation as a stance of 'non-intervention', of not wanting to interrupt the 'flow' of the game (p. 196). This 'non-interventionist' stance has been operationalized through the imposition of an informal ceiling on the number of penalties called. Behavior that is illegal is now considered part of the game. Leagues have adopted a policy of turning a blind eye to much of the less serious formal rule violation. As a result, players feel less constrained by these formal rules. There is a large 'gray area' where subjective decisions by a biased referee are the only standard in determining illegal behavior.

It is because of this 'gray area' that there has developed within hockey a set of informal rules. These informal rules define how players are to act in an environment where

the formal rules are ineffective in constraining behavior. They prescribe not only what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior, but also what kinds of responses are required for certain kinds of behavior. This code applies to all types of behavior, not just the illegal acts of others. It defines not only the objective of one's response, but also how this objective is to be achieved.

Fighting in hockey can be situated within this rule structure. It is clear that fighting is against the formal rules of the game. Invariably players who fight are penalized. Fights are penalized because they are so blatantly obvious it is impossible for referees to ignore them as they do the numerous minor infractions constantly occurring in a game. But fights are considered 'part of the game', and are not against the informal rules that exist within hockey. Fights occur in a climate of acceptability by players, fans, coaches, referees, and the media. In fact many players commented that these informal rules prescribe fighting as the only appropriate response in certain situations. Thus the informal rules have a profound influence upon the experience of fighting. As the events leading up to the fight are discussed the specific norms that affect this experience will become manifest. As well, as the game experience is discussed, the affect of these informal norms on playing hockey will be clear.

D. Junior vs. University

> *But in junior, if you high stick a guy, or if you give a spear or something, you know right there the guy's going to fight you.*

Many subjects in this research had played junior hockey before playing in the university system. There are different formal rules with regard to fighting in hockey between these two leagues. In university hockey, players are automatically expelled when they fight, while in junior hockey they have a 'three fight rule' and are only expelled after their third fight. These formal rules have a strong affect on the informal rules of the game. Many players noted a change in the informal rules which corresponded to the change in formal rules between these two leagues. These informal rules were discussed in terms of a different atmosphere toward fighting that was present in these leagues. For example, in discussing university hockey, one player remarked that:

> *Any sport at this level is going to be intense towards winning. Everyone*

wants to win and no one wants to lose. But as I say, the fighting is not that big of an issue.

Players consistently reported that junior hockey involved a greater emphasis on fighting. This was felt as a greater awareness that a fight was a potential part of the hockey experience. Fighting is definitely a 'big issue' in junior hockey. It was perceived as a necessary and mandatory part of a player's repertoire of skills.

A different emphasis exists with regard to fighting in university hockey. As one player noted:

It's in the air of the game, but it's not really ... it's not really an intimidating factor so much...

This different atmosphere also influences the events which lead up to fights. A player's response to others is largely determined by these informal rules. One player noted that in junior hockey he would retaliate immediately to an illegal behavior, but that:

...in this league, where you only get one fight... a lot of guys will..this doesn't really apply. Like "I can cut your eye out or something, and skate away, and cause I'm disciplined I won't get into a fight with you."

One reason why the atmosphere toward fighting in university hockey is different is the more severe penalties in this league. Many players choose not to fight because of them. Expectations of getting in a fight are lower in university hockey. A player knows he might have to fight, but the chances of this are diminished. Because of the less severe penalties given out for fighting, junior hockey is often referred to as being 'self-policing'. It is policed by players so that unacceptable behavior is quickly and decisively retaliated against.

If someone challenges you or whatever, you drop your gloves, and you fight him. And then it's over, if you beat him up he won't bother you again, no one else will. And that's the way it polices itself. But now you have to make sure...just hope the referees can catch it.

In junior hockey the penalties are not severe enough to deter players from fighting or engaging in other illegal behavior. This self-policing nature of junior hockey is a known element. Players are aware of the high possibility of fights, and they act accordingly. They do not 'cheap shot' guys as much, and they are prepared and willing to accept the consequences of their actions, should any occur. In university hockey, players put up with more illegal behavior than they would in juniors. They are less inclined to police their own

game because of the stricter penalties against fighting. The informal rules do not prescribe fighting as often, due to the formal rules.

> *In university hockey I don't think you can afford to fight, cause you're out of the game. Whereas in junior hockey... the same kind of stickwork, slashing and stuff, fights start just really quickly. [In university hockey] ...We know that we're gone right away, and you don't want to miss the game. You have to put up with a lot of it... and that is what causes a lot of the stickwork.*

'Stickwork' refers to one form of illegal behavior that referees usually overlook except in its most blatant and serious manifestations. This player is suggesting that 'stickwork' is a common occurrence when players do not police each other's game. Players know that the referees usually won't penalize these infractions, and that their opponents will not fight if they 'stick them'. The informal rules of university hockey prescribe talking to the player and/or the referee, rather than retaliating or policing the game oneself. Discipline is the predominant value, and is manifest when players do not fight when provoked. It is much more likely that a player could get by without fighting in university hockey as compared to junior hockey.

> *Like now, if you get into the corner with a guy, make any contact and you get, you know, you both punch each other once with your gloves on, push each other,... its like you can go away cause your disciplined in this league. Here its like nobody notices.*

The differences in the social context and meaning given to potentially provoking behavior do not show a clear demarcation between junior and university hockey. This is because many university players have previously played junior hockey, and the value of toughness in junior hockey is not always subordinate to the value of discipline for players in university hockey. This is clearly illustrated in the continuation of the above quote:

> *That's what the other guy is saying, but actually like I still consider... like I still consider him as backing down, cause I was kind of trained in the juniors, where if you made eye contact then that's it, that's the challenge 'let's go!' If you don't go then your backing up.*

E. The Body

> *The adrenaline gets pumping so fast, that you don't feel anything...until its over...or until something happens where you get a chance to stop.*

Hockey is a game played with both the body and the mind, although it is the body that one is most conscious of. The mind directs the body, and is the unseen part that

players usually aren't aware of. They are totally absorbed in their bodies, and their bodies are totally absorbed in the game. The link between the mind and the body expands until the mind is imperceptible, and 'becomes' the body. Dryden (1983) discusses this, and notes that when he 'gets into' a game, he doesn't notice his body, nor does he tell it what to do. Yet it moves, and he somehow knows it moves, and he knows it moves because he has directed it to move (p. 187). It is the mind which directs the body, and when the mind is 'unseen', so too is the mind's awareness of the body. Thus the game is what players are conscious of.

Players report that it is through the body that the actions of others are known. When a player gets hit, or slashed, he first feels these actions, then he knows them mentally. This occurs when the player attends to or directs his thought to his body. If he keeps his thoughts in the game, his body will feel these, but his mind will not know them. The example of pain illustrates this clearly. The body is the vehicle through which pain (or, fatigue or injury) are experienced. Players first 'feel' these at the physical level, and if attention is given to them by the mind, their presence becomes known consciously.

This attention may occur some time after the act takes place. A player may not attend to his body until there is a break in the play, i.e., a face off or a line change. The break in action gives him time to reflect and direct his attention from the game to his body. This time is usually not available during the game, unlike other sports which have starts and stops.

When severely injured, the pain is much harder to ignore. It intrudes on the player's consciousness not only in the form of pain, but also in the form of a lost functional ability. A player may try to get up and notice his knee does not move properly, and with this he may notice sharp pains in his knee. Similarly, when the game is less absorbing, the players may not be concentrating as much. In these instances, the body, and one's injuries, are noticed to a greater degree.

Sometimes a player's body will not respond as well as he wishes it to. He may want to move quickly, but he can't. This discrepency between what a player wants or intends to do and what he actually does may be caused by fatigue. The game of hockey is played with the body, and when a player's body is tired it does not respond as quickly and effectively as when fresh and rested. One player may try to catch someone, or deke around

someone, or take a hard shot at the goalie, but his legs and arms are too weary to respond as he would like. He wants to do this, and wills his arms and legs to do it, but they fail to respond.

An injury is experienced similarly to fatigue. Injuries of varying degrees of severity are a common part of the game of hockey, due to the intensity of the physical action. These hinder a player in a similar way to fatigue. A player wants to move quickly or strongly, but the pain from the injury reminds him that he cannot, and he holds back and doesn't try as hard. He hesitates. The pain reminds him of the injury and that it needs to be nursed by careful and controlled play. An injured player seldom goes all out in his play. Most prefer to save themselves and the injured part until they are in better health, able to play at one hundred percent capacity. This pain is noticed, whereas other pain is not, because players are sensitive to this pain. They attend to this pain because they do not want to get hurt worse. When players don't know they are injured, they may play for a whole game with a very severe injury. When this occurs it is because the player didn't notice the pain, or he thought it was a minor injury. some athletes have competed for extended times with known, extremely severe injuries. It is not the pain that influences a player's perception, but his knowledge of the meaning of the pain. When a player knows he is recovering from an injury, the pain may mean he is pushing himself too hard. When he doesn't know he is hurt, or when the injury is minor, the pain may be deliberately ignored and have no meaning for the player.

In hockey, body contact is plentiful. Both the formal and the informal rules prescribe and condone this, and it is an integral part of the higher ranks of competitive hockey. Many players reported a satisfaction and enjoyment derived from this aspect of the game. Body contact increases their absorption into the game.

> *...your more into the game when its a hard hitting game. Your on top of your game I would say, myself anyways.*

Being 'more into' or 'more on top of' one's game refers to the focussed concentration on the game discussed earlier. Body contact enhances this aspect of the game. This is because it requires greater skill than some other parts of the game. As well, mistakes in performing body checks can and often are more painful and dangerous than mistakes in other parts of the game. Players are aware of this, and therefore they concentrate more

when hitting people. They tighten up both physically and mentally before and during body checks to protect themselves from getting injured. Players are more into both the game and their bodies during games that involve hitting.

F. Us vs. Them

> *But you get to have a tight rival, and "My team is better than yours" and there's the whole Saints bench going like: "Yeah..." calling us chickens, you know, "babies... come on you fags".*

Hockey is a team game. Membership in a team or 'group' that is engaged in cooperative efforts towards achieving a goal (i.e., winning hockey games) influences how the players view both their team-mates and their opponents. Players feel and express an affinity for members of their own team, and they feel and express a hostility for their opponents. These feelings are not an inherent aspect of the relationships between the people—rather they are an inherent aspect of the relationships between these people as hockey players. Dave Schultz (1982) described this clearly as it existed in the Philadelphia Flyers. He discussed the commraderie that existed between team-mates, and described how it was expressed in dressing rooms, on planes, in hotels, etc. This was so strong that even the wives of the players were excluded. After he was traded and played against the Flyers as a member of his new team, the commraderie was immediately replaced by hostility. It was because he was a Flyer, not because he was Dave Schultz, that he had been 'one of the guys'. The commraderie was based on team (group) membership, and was not due to any intrinsic friendships existing between players.

This group membership also creates a feeling of hostility towards one's opponents. Players typically view the player who loses control in a fight negatively. But when it is a member of one's group who loses control, players support and condone this behavior, because of their group membership. One player commented on this.

> *What did that feel like? Oh, its a guy on your team, and he's beating up the opposition, so everyone's going: "Allright, Turney! Good job!" And then after the game, even though he freaked out and everything, ... there won't be a guy on the team that won't skate by him and go "Good job!...that away out there, good job!"*

In contrast, when a player sees the opposition beating up a team-mate his reaction is usually to try to help him out. Players like to see their opponents get beat up, but not their

team-mates.

There is much evidence in the research which supports the existence of this bias in perspective resulting from group membership (see Sharriff et al., 1961; Scott and Cherrington, 1974; and Worchel et al., 1977). Sharriff et al., (1961) conducted research which showed that cooperative behavior increased unity of group members and increased conflict between opposing groups. This feeling of commraderie involves viewing the behavior of team-mates as justified because the people doing the behavior are one's team-mates. They are of the same group, or similar, to oneself. Players identify with their group. Illegal behavior directed at another member of the group is viewed in the same negative light as if it were directed at them.

A feeling of conflict and hostility exists between opposing groups. Players view illegal acts directed at the opposition positively because of this same subjective perspective. In both cases, who is doing the behavior, and their relationship to the viewer, are more important to how the behavior is evaluated than what the behavior entails.

G. Conflict

> *...you have to know the sport history, when we were going up in St. Albert it was just war. With Messier it was just war, and they just hated us.*

As the above quote indicates, the 'sport history' between two teams may create 'bad vibes' that exist independent of any actual behavior. Players expect to experience feelings of conflict and animosity even before they arrive at the game. These may result from previous encounters with this team or a certain player(s) on this team. They may also result from a general feeling towards the game of hockey, i.e., an awareness or expectation that fights are common when playing hockey. These feelings influence the experience of playing the game independent of what actually happens during the game.

Conflict is more pervasive in hockey than in other sports because the players have opposing intentions, which are manifest in a physical way. One player is trying to do one thing, while the opponent tries to stop him and do the opposite. In almost every situation in the game, whatever one player tries to do is resisted by the opposition. In hockey, as in many sports, discerning the opposing player's intentions is a valuable skill. This 'anticipation' involves being able to see in advance what the opponent intends in order that

his behavior can be thwarted.

In hockey, thwarting of the opponent's intentions is direct, personal, and physical. A player does not try to thwart the result of an opponent's actions, but tries to thwart his ability to move and act freely in the game. He tries to prohibit the opponent from accomplishing his intended actions. This opposition is physical. One player may try to go around another and get slammed into, and driven into the boards. He may try to take a wrist shot and his stick is prevented from moving by the opponent's stick. He may wait in front of the net for a deflection, and an opposing player will come from behind and knock him down or push him out of the way. These hindrances are direct and they are physical.

In other sports, this thwarting of behavior is not as direct or as physical. To contrast with tennis, one player reacts to his opponent's actions, but he doesn't directly hinder or thwart these actions. For example, one player volleys, and the opponent reacts to the shot. But he doesn't try to prevent the first player from executing his shot. His actions are directed at the ball and controlling the game through controlling the ball, rather than prohibiting his opponent from hitting the ball. It is partly because this thwarting is so direct and so physical that hockey has more conflict than other sports.

H. Frustration

> *...I was really frustrated in the game, and it was in the last three minutes of the game, and I was really frustrated. I couldn't, just from not playing well, and not doing the things I wanted to do, and it just really frustrated me, really got me tense and stuff, just not being able to play up to what I thought I should be doing.*

It is the discrepancy between what a person wills or intends, and what he actually does, that leads to feelings of frustration. The above player had expectations about his play that were not being realized. He was not achieving his goals. He was not playing as well as he thought he should, and he felt frustrated about this. His frustrations arose because he had a very strong desire to play well, which was not being realized. This strong desire is essential for frustration to occur.

When players are frustrated they experience feelings of anger and hostility. These are directed towards the perceived cause of this thwarting. In hockey, as noted, thwarting often results from the physical actions of others. Not surprisingly, then, players frequently reported experiencing feelings of anger and frustration towards their

opponents.

There are many factors that contribute to a player not being able to do what he wants to do. Injuries, fatigue, and the direct physical actions of others have been discussed. There are others, to be discussed shortly. Because there are a large number of incidents which can lead to frustration, and because these are very common in hockey, frustration is a common experience. Players feel frustrated often, from a variety of factors, most arising from within the game, but some from outside of hockey as well.

An understanding of the experience of frustration illuminates why most of the empirical research has yielded ambiguous results when examining this question. Frustration does appear to result from the thwarting of one's intentions, as the players in this study have repeatedly commented. And aggressive behavior often results when players are feeling frustrated, according to the accounts of all of the players surveyed in this study. The problem with the empirical research lies in an inaccurate understanding of this experience.

Frustration is present when the goal that is sought after is highly desired by the person being thwarted. If this goal isn't highly valued, then being thwarted from achieving it won't cause a player to be frustrated. Few empirical studies have investigated the importance or value of the goal to the person being thwarted. Physical opposition does not cause frustration unless there is a desire on the part of the player to play well, and to try hard. When strong desires are not present, then frustration is less likely to result if one's intentions are thwarted.

I. Intimidation

> *Maybe he hits you and while you were down he just gave your helmet a little push, cause its an intimidating game, so while he's on top of you he just gives your helmet a little push...and you don't like that. I don't know anybody that likes to get their forehead rubbed into the ice.*

Along with conflict, the game of hockey is rife with intimidation. Attempts to coerce and intimidate others occur constantly, in a variety of ways. Intimidation is such a common occurrence in hockey (and in other sports) that it is accepted as part of the game. The rules and the physical nature of hockey make it very easy for one player to intimidate another.

Intimidation does not describe a type of behavior, but rather a type of relationship that exists between players. As noted, there are a variety of behaviors that can be used to establish an intimidating relationship. Intimidation is not against the rules of hockey, although the behaviors used to create this relationship of intimidation often are. To intimidate means "...to make timid or fearful, to compel or deter as if by threat..." (Websters, 1977, p. 605). In hockey, players try to intimidate others by using physical or verbal behaviors that are calculated to cause others to be timid, fearful, and deterred from acting. Players utilize physical force as their main tool in creating this intimidating relationship. Intimidation involves controlling others and exercising power over them. In hockey it is used to control the behavior of other players, so that their desire will be lacking and their play will be inhibited.

When players are intimidated they still have a strong desire to play, but their performance is hindered by fear of injury, pain, or embarassment. Players want to lose themselves in the game, but they feel hindered by the opponent, just as clearly as if this hindrance was a physical one. Players do not like to be intimidated. When they are intimidated they often experience feelings of frustration.

Intimidation is a coercive tactic used intrumentally by players to help them win. It is a commonly accepted belief (i.e., norm) that if the other team is intimidated they won't play nearly as well. A player tries to intimidate others by getting their minds off hockey and onto other things. Through his behavior, he tries to instill fear in the minds of his opponents, with the hope that they will think more about this fear, and a possible fight, than about the game. We've previously noted that if a player's attention is not wholly focussed on the game his performance often suffers.

> *Well like I said with that ____ ... He had most of our team, I'd say except for about three of us, like nobody would go around him eh. And he'd just run guys on our team.* [19]

The reason why 'nobody would go around' this player was that he intimidated them. They were afraid of the consequences if they did try to go around him. They acted timidly and didn't try to go around him. When this happens a team's performance obviously declines. Players can't perform effectively when they are hesitant to go into the other team's end.

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[19]When players discussed team-mates or other players whose anonymity it was deemed important to preserve, blank lines have been used in place of their proper names.

You really have people guessing when your playing the body all the time. They might say, "Well geez, I don't want to go down on him again. I'll just dump the puck in and chase it."

'Playing the body' a lot is one way for players to keep the opposing team intimidated. When a big defenceman 'plays the body' the opposition is often left 'guessing'. The term guessing implies that players are hesitating. They are not sure of themselves, or of what to do. They are thinking twice before acting, instead of acting instinctively, without thinking, as they normally do in the game. They are aware of the potential pain and injury that may occur, and they don't want to 'go down on him again' as a result. They hesitate. This hesitation may only momentarily affect behavior, but if players hesitate every time before making a decision, when compounded for all the decisions they normally make instinctively during a game, this can have a very noticable affect. In sports parlance this is known as 'hearing footsteps'.

It comes down to intimidation. You want to scare the other team, you want to intimidate them, you want them to not want to play against your guys. You want them to, ...their desire to be lacking. You want them to give up. I mean you want to make your job easy, and that's one form of doing it.

This comment is typical of many responses, and illustrates that fear is an element of intimidation. When players intimidate others their behavior is designed to instill fear in the opposition. They might physically abuse an opponent, or portray an image of toughness and meanness. The object is to give the opposition the impression that if he does something to anger or incite this player, he will receive more physical abuse. Some try to capitilize on the existence of this fear by verbally threatening others.

There's some guys that have threatened me, saying, "Look, don't go out to your car by yourself __." Its a big intimidation game, they think so long as they got you scared,... they got you scared then they've got you beat type of thing.

Players who are intimidated report the presence of fear. They fear that the opposition might provoke a fight with them, or that they might be embarrassed or humiliated. Fear of injury is common. It is fear of the consequences that causes players to hesitate and to back down from potentially challenging situations. Players think that 'when your scared they've got you beat' because when a player is scared he's likely to hesitate, and when he hesitates, they have an advantage.

This 'backing off' is the fundamental element of intimidation. It is a making of the player into a 'timid' person. Hockey players described this as a hesitation, a lack of desire

to go out onto the ice. They don't want to take their normal shift, they hesitate to step out onto the ice and they hesitate to act as quickly as they normally would when playing the game. Players believe that aggressive play will cause others to be more antagonistic so they behave timidly in order not to antagonize the player(s) who have intimidated them.

Many players reported this experience of fear, but only some reported it hindered them or caused them to hesitate. This is because it is how a player responds to the fear that determines if he'll be intimidated. The behavior of the opposition is there only to instill this fear in a player. When the opposition becomes hostile, an individual choses to respond to this behavior in a variety of ways. He may chose to respond by becoming fearful. If so, how he responds to his fear determines whether he will be intimidated or not.

Bill Curry, in football, comments that 'some players feign it' and implies that they pretend to be hostile in order to intimidate others (Plimpton, 1977, pp. 84-85). He also notes that some players try to ignore this hostility. By this he implies that fear results from the way a person views the behavior of others. This behavior can be ignored. If it is, players won't be fearful or intimidated. They won't hesitate. Fear is not an object that can be observed, measured, or quantified. It is one response of individuals to the behavior of others. If a player choses to ignore the intimidating intentions of others, their behavior won't be intimidating because they won't cause a fearful response. Players chose to become fearful or not by how they respond to the behavior of others.

J. Freedom

> *Its kind of like, you back down, and they got a little bit of an advantage from it. They can feel that they can take more liberties on your team.*

Being intimidated is experienced as a fear. It is also experienced as a loss of freedom. Players feel constrained by the menacing stares and behavior of others. They do not feel as free to play with abandon, to lose themselves in the game, and to play or react instinctively to the flow of the game. There is the ever-present fear of retribution. They know that if they aren't watchful they are liable to get hurt, or get into a fight.

Those who intimidate others experience an increased 'freedom'. To have freedom is to have room to maneuver free of the hindrances from others. It is to be free to lose

oneself in the game, without any fear or hesitation due to possible hostile behavior from others. This freedom comes to those who do not hesitate or back down. It is given to those who intimidate from those who get intimidated. Freedom results when one player is intimidated. His timid style of play allows his opponent to play more freely, with less physical hindrances. One player described how he 'earned' this freedom to do what he wanted on the ice because of the way he played:

> *...I know after my first year, the second year I had around 250 minutes in penalties in the league. And I... they knew... players knew that I wouldn't take any,.. by this time, so... The end of the second year and the third and fourth I had so much room. Like the average guy, it would be one of the tougher guys that would do anything to me eh.*

'Hesitation' or 'backing off' result when players have had some time to think about the possible consequences of their actions. The initial 'automatic' response is to lose oneself in the game. If players are not made to stop and think, it is unlikely that they will hesitate (unless hesitation has been built into their automatic response repertoire). It is when one is reminded of the possibility of pain, injury, or embarassment that he is likely to hesitate, and in so doing lose his freedom. A player's previous behavior may be known to others, and this knowledge may act as a reminder, thus causing them to hesitate.

Verbal behavior may also occur to remind players and get them thinking about their fears. One player commented on this verbal harassment:

> *Some guys you didn't have to, like they'd just give it [freedom] to you. Like some guys you could just talk to them, and they'd just... they'd freeze you know. That's not everybody but some guys...*

As noted, players respond differently to the actions of others. Talking to some players may be enough to make them freeeze. These players may have already been intimidated physically, and thereafter words may be enough. One player noted that if a person ever did back down, he wanted to remind him of this often to make him do it again.

> *Those guys... if a guy does you don't ever let him forget it. You know, next time you play them you will keep saying you know, "Your yellow", things like that, and you just try and get him thinking about that, so it will throw him off his game, and you can do more or less what you want with a guy.*

This comment suggests that verbal behavior is an attempt to control and manipulate the opponent's thoughts. The player tries to distract the opponent from the game and get him thinking about his fears, or a possible fight. When one player intimidates another, he

has controlled him and 'can do more or less what he wants with a guy'. In this case the control is not over the player's physical body, but over his thoughts. Often physical control is initially required, in order to establish this intimidating relationship, but once established it can usually be maintained by controlling a player's thoughts. When distracted, a player loses awareness of his immediate intentions, and thereafter others can 'do more or less what they want' with him.

K. Respect

You respect them for how hard they work, and for how tough they are, but you don't really go after them.

Many players have adopted intimidating behavior in their upward climb through the ranks of hockey (Vaz, 1982, ch. 4,5). However, not all players engage in this form of sanctioned coercion. Some only want to gain 'respect' from the opposition. 'Respect' is something nearly all players in this study reported they wanted, while only some reported wanting to intimidate others. Respect means "...to consider worthy of high regard... to refrain from interfering with" (Websters, 1977, p. 986). Respect was discussed in terms of a desire to prove oneself, a desire to establish oneself, a desire to show that one would stand up and would not be intimidated. Respect was something players wanted to gain from others, something they tried to obtain or 'earn' by their behavior. Like intimidation, it is a type of relationship between people, and not an objectively observable quantifiable entity. When a player respects an opponent, he won't hesitate and he won't give him more freedom than normal, i.e., as if he was intimidated by him; but neither will he try to intimidate the opponent by being physically antagonistic. Respect involves mutual accord, an unstated but affirmed equality. A player will respect those who respect him, and will treat them in an equitable manner. He will play them fairly, according to the rules and norms of 'clean' hockey. Most players in this study reported respecting players on the other team who played clean, fair, tough, hard-nosed hockey. They did not respect those who tried to intimidate them, because this indicated a lack of mutual respect.

For respect to exist, a mutuality is necessary. Players who want respect normally treat others within the rules. Their objective is not to intimidate others by tearing them down, but to increase their own self-worth by gaining respect. They want to gain respect

so they will have more freedom. They feel this can best be accomplished within the formal rules of the game. When an opponent tries to intimidate someone, it may become necessary to intimidate back, in order to develop this mutual respect. One player's comment with regard to illegally 'sticking' an opponent clarifies this.

> *The only time I've done that is if somebody's done it to me, that's the way I play it. But I don't go out of my way to bully somebody or give them a cheap shot or anything like that. If I can get them clean I'd rather get them that way...*

This player comments that getting players 'clean' is his preference. He later clarifies what this 'clean' means, and explains what it is he tries to do by 'get them clean.'

> *Yeah, according to the rules. I think you can make your presence felt more, like according to the rules, with a good shoulder check than you do with an elbow and that.*

The comment 'making your presence felt' illustrates what this relationship of respect involves. One's presence is felt in a specific way. A player who desires respect tries to project a certain kind of presence or image to others. He is showing first that he won't be intimidated or back down. Secondly he is showing that his intent is to play hockey fairly, and not to try to intimidate others off their game by cheap shots. Finally, he is showing that he will stand up for himself, but only if provoked. This final point is important for the establishment of 'respect', because if others think a player won't stand up for himself, they'll 'do it to him every time.'

L. Roles/Images

> *But you're always known for a goal scorer, so then you're kind of confused, you don't know whether to try to fight. ...its a hard thing, because coach expects you to be a tough guy, buy you know you're not, you have to be a goal scorer, that's what got you there,...its pretty confusing for a young kid.*

When players enter into the set-apart reality of a hockey game, they enter a world with different rules and goals, with different values and meanings, with a different 'culture'. Within this set-apart reality players often adopt a new 'identity', a new image or role: one that is different from their off-ice identity. Players experience themselves and others differently on the ice. Gibson (1975) has researched into and described the violent roles existing within the hockey subculture, and his description of these roles and the characteristics of those who attain to these roles is illuminating. His typology is, however,

based on a conceptual rather than an experiential analysis of the hockey culture. Many of the distinctions between roles that he discussed were not apparent in the lived experiences of the players in this study. For example, a 'hatchet-man' or a 'stick-man' was not experienced as an abstract categorized entity, but rather as someone who was likely at any time to slash or spear another player with his stick. These roles were known in terms of their behavioral dispositions rather than their categorical characteristics. The categorizations were not elements of the lived experience. As well, Gibson does not discuss how these new and different roles affect the experience of fighting in hockey.

A player's identity is a compilation of his own self-image and the reflected appraisal of others. Players are aware of this identity by the way others treat them, as well as by their own past history, which is also known to them in a reflexive way through the eyes of others. This combines with their own self-image to create their identity. Players know their identity on the ice is different from their off ice identity. The adoption of a new identity makes it easier to experience the game as a separate reality. The player has a different identity, the norms and values are different, and the identities of other players are different from their off-ice identities. Several players noted surprise at the differences in behavior portrayed by others as they entered and left the separate world of hockey.

Players realize their role is dependant on their past history, i.e., their performance in previous similar situations. One player commented on his awareness of his own role and noted: *"That's the way I trained all through juniors..."* A player's past history is known by him, as is its affect on others. Player's experience this history in expectations that both he and others bring to the current situation. Both he and others expect his future behavior to be in accordance with his role as indicated by his previous history. One's history creates one's role.

One's history includes one's upbringing, one's environment, and the learning and exposure one has had to various roles. If a player had no exposure to a certain role, he would not know how to engage in behavior appropriate to that role. But it is not simply exposure to the role that is important. The attention one pays to these various roles also determines which roles one will adopt.

Uh, well I guess you wouldn't say that it just started this year, you know,

...with the Golden Bears. It had started a long time ago. One of the reasons ___ ____ went and played Western Tier One hockey and that was because he was tough. He didn't mind the fighting and the rough going...

Attention is implied here in the terms 'not minding', i.e., not disliking the rough going. Because this person chose to play in such a league, he was already indicating his disposition towards the kind of rough going present in that league. He attended, or paid attention, to this kind of behavior. Through constant exposure to these kinds of roles he gradually assumed such a role himself. This player's role during hockey games, as illustrated by his behavior, could be categorized as an enforcer or policeman according to the typology Gibson (1975) has developed.

There is ample evidence to suggest that players adopt a certain role, although this is experienced as adopting a certain style of behavior rather than adopting a role or an image. The role is attached after the behavior, and is really an abstract label placed on and used to describe the type of player one becomes as a result of the behavioral style he adopts. When a player acts like a goon, he will be labelled like a goon, even if he isn't really trying to be one.

A role requires that the person conform to it's defined expectations in order for it to be maintained. If a player wants to be seen as a tough guy he must act like a tough guy. His style of play must reflect his desired image. He may not have to be a tough guy, but he must act like a tough guy. He must project an image so that others will perceive him as he wishes to be perceived. In this way, players adopt roles that guide and direct their resulting behavioral style. Players who want to portray a certain style know they must project behavior in accordance with this style.

Roles influence how players perceive others, and how they respond to others. If someone's role includes being tough and intimidating and he hits a player in the corner, the player may interpret this as an attempt to intimidate him and get him to hesitate next time. Further he may respond based on this perception, in order to project his own role as someone who won't back down; even though this response may be based on the ascribed intentions of the opponent (based on his role), as opposed to his real intentions. Thus a player is sometimes intimidated because of the perceived role of the opponent, not the outward behavior. These roles are uniquely perceived and responded to through the lense of the hockey culture, which has norms that prescribe these. For example, it was noted

that a 'goon' is respected on the ice, while being negatively sanctioned off the ice.

> *He wasn't really known, he was known as a strong guy, but he gained his reputation. He fought __ ___ and then he'd fight another guy, like he'd fight a tough ... he fought about one tough guy from every team, and hammered them, and then all of a sudden he got a reputation, and then after that, he could do anything he wanted almost.*

One's role in hockey is known as a 'reputation'. A reputation is something players attempt to consciously monitor and portray to others. They control their reputation by adopting a behavioral style consistent with the image they wish to project to others. When a player realizes his reputation is not what he wants it to be, he will change his behavior in order to develop the type of reputation he wants to have. If a player wants to be known for his toughness, for example, he will fight other players in order to 'prove' that he is the type of person he is making claim to be, i.e., a tough guy.

Generally, players respond to others based on the other's reputation, which is the result of their portrayed behavioral style. However at times players 'label' others in a fashion that does not accurately take account of this behavior. A label arises due to preconceived or inaccurate notions about the opponent. When a player is labelled, this label may not be related to his behavior, and the label may not change even if his behavior does. Others may respond to him according to this label, while he may be trying to portray a different image and expect others to respond to him differently. A reputation can be considered the result of perceptual processes, while a label is the result of conceptual processes. Both of these can fail to portray the individual accurately, and both bias an individual's perception.

Dryden (1983) discussed this labelling process as it occurred with Swedish players in the N.H.L. There exists a notion in the N.H.L. that Swedish players don't like to hit, with the result that they get hit often. This notion biases the player's perception, so that the Swedes are 'tested' far more than are other players. Long after other players have passed this test, the Swedish players must face it again, because they are Swedes (Dryden, 1983, p. 194).

There also exists a notion that a player should not back down from other players, and when he does he is labelled a 'chicken'. To be labelled a chicken, or as someone who won't 'stand up' doesn't happen immediately. It usually requires more than one type of behavior for this to occur. There exists a constellation of behaviors which a person must

engage in to be labelled a chicken. These include backing down, hesitating, playing with less desire and abandon, and giving the opponent more freedom. It is when this constellation is conformed to that a player is typically labelled a chicken, and treated accordingly. Players can back down from cheap shots (by not retaliating), and still not get labelled as a chicken. This happens when the sum total of their behavior is not consistent with the behaviors of a chicken. A player may engage in this type of behavior for a short time and not get labelled as a chicken. One player known for his toughness reported that he didn't always retaliate against others: *"There's been times where you've said no to a fight because of the situation."* (These situational factors will be discussed in a later section).

People develop typical or patterned styles of behavior towards responding to cheap shots. This general pattern or behavioral style is the most accurate reflection of one's role. It usually requires several observations in order to determine this pattern. Labels are often assigned quickly, after one or a few observations. They are thus likely to be assigned inaccurately, especially when this label does not accurately reflect the total constellation of an individual's behvioral repertoire.

A reputation is usually determined after a longer period of time, and is based on a more complete assessment of the player's constellation of behaviors. It is therefore usually more accurate. A player who is more consistent in his behavior is more likely to receive an accurate label than one who is less consistent.

If a player or team has no role or history from which to derive expectations about future behavior, they will be unsure about how to treat their opponents. Players react to others based on how they think they'll respond back, and this is determined by the opponent's previous role or style of behavior. A reciprocity of expectations exists, so that both parties are likely to respond based on the expected response of the other. One player noted that if the opposition's expectations of his behavior are unclear or uncertain he could and would behave differently from his usual role.

> *...but usually neither of us are really too keen on going. Especially if you don't know the person, like if you're playing a team that you haven't played before, they'll be hesitant to try, to drop the gloves on you, cause they don't know. Its easy to work that way, like I find that if we're playing a team we haven't played before, you can be intimidating verbally, because they don't know how tough you are.*

When a response is different than expected surprise and confusion results. In describing a brawl he got into, one player clearly illustrates how the reputation of the opponent, as well as the norms of hockey, influenced his expectations:

> *...cause, well, he was going, he was asking me, "Lets break some of these fights up" or something like that. I don't know if he meant it or not... And he was saying these things, and then after a while I just... was king of going through the motions now. But you know, it's one of the Sutters eh, and there not known for, like there known for—they'll fight anybody... The first brawl I've ever been in and this guy's asking me to break up the fights. I just, this isn't the way its supposed to be.*

Most styles of behavior can be conceptualized into groups, and the typology by Gibson is one categorization scheme. There are however, distinct styles of behavior, or roles, that certain players have adoped that are unique to themselves and very few others.

> *He's got his own game now, he's like a Bob Gainey. Those two guys have their own... their own sort of game. Like Wayne Gretzky has his game, these guys have their own game, and they play that game.*

These 'games' are distinct, and referred to as their 'own' game. A tough guy also involves a distinct role, as does a policeman, a goon, or a stickman, as described in Gibson's typology. What makes the 'games' discussed in the above quote distinct from the 'game' of a goon or an enforcer is their uniqueness from these more common roles, and the relatively few numbers of players who have 'made them their own'. In other words, Gainey has 'his own game', because he is one of a small minority of players who are playing this style of hockey. His game is his own because his style of play is different from the style of play adopted by most hockey players. It is still unique, it bears his mark on it. It has not been copied and made common and unrecognizable by large numbers of other players. Gretzky's game is distinct because there are few that are able to play it successfully. These players have created these distinct styles of play, and in so doing they have created a unique role. They have not behaved according to the currently existing roles in hockey. Had they done so, their behavior would have been no different from any number of other players who had the same role. By being different they have created a different 'game'. Just as roles guide and define for players what is appropriate behavior in certain situations, new behavior creates new ways of being, new styles of hockey, and new 'games' for the future.

Roles require an audience in order to be developed and maintained. Spectators are essential to observe the way players present themselves and to provide feedback on their success at portraying their image. Faulkner (1973) discussed 'testing' the role of others, and noted that this testing is a practice prescribed by the norms of the hockey world. This testing implies that players are aware that others have a certain style of behavior, and that their behavioral style is meant to portray an image of how they want to be perceived as opposed to how they really are. Players test their opponents to determine if their behavior is for real, or if it is an act.

The real person is underneath. The outward manifestations of behavior are portrayals or significations (objective) of this underlying (subjective) nature. Some players accurately portray their inner self through their outward behavior, while others manufacture a false image of what they would like to be, rather than what they really are. This may occur consciously or unconsciously, no intentionality is implied in this. The constant evaluation of others that occurrs in hockey games involves comparing their behavior to their projected image. Inconsistencies that indicate one's image may be illusory are looked for. It is not possible to accurately assess a player without actually seeing him in action. It is easy to act tough without actually being tough. One player discussed this constant evaluation of others that occurs in hockey.

> *...you can't really get an idea other than physical stature, like he's big, or he might look like he can go. But unless somebody, like word of mouth has gotten around, its really tough to determine how tough a person is. Anybody can look tough...*

It is because of the ease with which players can project a tough image that there exists a constant testing of the role of others.

M. Mental Fights

Oh, I guess its always in the back of your mind.

This was the response of one player when asked if he ever thought about fighting in hockey. We would not expect a person going to school or to the store to have thoughts of a fight 'in the back of his mind'. Nor for the businessman having lunch with his colleagues, the mother cooking supper for her family, or the guy on a bike ride on a sunny summer day. A plethora of situations could be listed where the existence of these kind of

thoughts 'in the back of [some]one's mind' would be unexpected. But hockey is not one of these situations. Hockey is a game where the possibility of a fight is great, particularly at the older, more competitive levels. Players experience this possibility as an awareness 'in the back of their mind' that a fight might occur. They know that fights have occurred in the past and will continue in the future—and that they may be involved in a fight at any time during the game.

This awareness exists 'in the back of one's mind' throughout the game, but there are certain situations that influence this. In some situations the possibility of a fight may become greater than at other times, and, in some situations one's awareness of this possibility may increase. When a player is intimidated, and/or his mind is distracted from the game, he is likely to become more aware of this possibility. In fact, it is just this possibility that the person intimidating him is trying to get him to think about, because while thinking about potential fights he won't be concentrating as much on the game.

Players also experience an increased awareness of this possibility when they are frustrated and mad. When angry, thoughts of getting even and of retaliating at the person one is mad at often occur. These thoughts usually include the possible end result of such behavior, i.e., a fight.

Rough games, where body checks are plentiful and the play of the game is intense, are other times when players may be more conscious of a fight occurring. Games that are slow paced and not as intense are less likely to evoke thoughts of anger, frustration, and hence less likely to evoke an increased awareness of this possibility.

This awareness may occur before the game begins, i.e., in the dressing room, or even several days before the game. When playing a team they know they've had previous confrontations with, awareness of this possibility is likely to be especially high. When asked when he might think about fights, one player responded:

> *Like think about it beforehand? Oh, against a team that you've maybe had problems with a player before, and that you know maybe that's the style that team plays, intimidating style, and... More like, you evaluate, you take a look at the players that you have to be playing against, and see what they're like, and say, "Well geez, I might... I might have to be prepared for this..."*

Teams or players with reputations for toughness, intimidation, and fighting are especially likely to produce an increased awareness of the possibility of fighting.

The awareness of a possible fight is not only experienced as the cognitive knowledge that a fight may occur, but also as the living through of the actual experience of a fight, or parts thereof. This may include very specific and/or graphic imagery of the details of the fight. Dave Schultz described how he used to work especially hard to maintain his image as a hockey enforcer. To do this he would deliberately imagine himself fighting specific players on the opposing team, before the game began (Schultz, 1982, p. 38). This helped him to be very successful when it came time to carry out the behavior necessary to maintain his 'enforcer' image. This study has substantiated this in the lives of university hockey players:

> *I don't know, sometimes you think about individual players on the other team that your going to play against. And you know that they're aggressive, and you know that then maybe you might have to get into a fight. So you prepare yourself that way.*

Several of the above quotes, and the material from Schultz, mention the idea of preparation. Awareness of a possible fight helps one to prepare for it. If a hockey player is aware of this possibility, he'll be prepared for it when it happens, and if not, he'll be disadvantaged when it occurs.

> *Sometimes your not...your not out there looking for a fight-your involved in the game. When I say not prepared I'm saying that someone else wants to get the jump on you. Your not completely ready for a fight. You might be looking up the ice or something and so in that sense your not prepared ...*

This preparation involves 'looking for' a fight, as opposed to looking up the ice. 'Looking for' a fight takes place in the mind, and leads to a readiness to fight. Without this preparation a player might be caught off guard, and end up being the recipient of another player's hostility.

How does mentally thinking about fighting help one to be prepared for the actuality of a fight? What is it to be ready or prepared for a fight? The answer lies in the affect that this awareness has on a person. When speaking of thinking about fights, one player described the experience as follows:

> *I know when I've done that, you get this kind of, again you get pumping, you have to get pumped up to do something like that, cause you don't know, it could be a real tough guy...*

Being ready involves a gradual increase in one's awareness of the possibility of a fight. A fight is no longer 'in the back of one's mind', but increasingly dominates one's

consciousness. When a fight dominates one's thoughts, two aspects are involved. One is an arousal of the player's body through the fight or flight mechanism. The mind perceives and interprets the external environment, and the body reacts to this, sometimes automatically. If a player expects to get into a fight, his body will become aroused and excited and 'ready' for the fight. It is this aroused state that was described by the words 'getting pumped up to do something' in the above quote.

The second aspect of this mental preparation involves a shift in one's intentions. The details of playing the game no longer totally dominate one's consciousness. Instead the details of fighting begin to be present. They aren't just 'in the back of one's mind'. This shift in intentions involves specific details of fighting. As noted above, Dave Schultz used to visualize, in detail, the players on the opposite team he might have to fight, and the specific way he would fight them in order to win. This research has uncovered the same phenomena. Awareness of potential fights includes specific details of the fight. Whether the person is left or right handed, taller with more reach or shorter with less reach, stronger, weaker, faster, slower, etc., are all aspects that may be considered in this. The mechanics of the actual fight are experienced visually during this process. These details provide pre-existing intentions that help the person to shift focus and 'get into' a fight should a real one develop.

Thus the preparation involved in thinking about fights involves both the emotional arousal to get one pumped up to fight, as well as visualization of the specific details of the fight itself. When either of these are lacking, it will take more time for a player to shift his focus, and/or to get pumped up to fight. He will be disadvantaged if the opponent 'gets the jump' on him before he is prepared. This was clearly noted in the current study:

> *...so I'm preparing myself, I say, "Now I'm not going to go looking for it, but if I have to this is what I'm going to do. I'm going to be ready, I'm going to..." I get a little picture in my head that I'm going to drop, and then square off, and even if he's got the reach on me I'll come up inside. I knew beforehand that if I was going to fight him I was going to fight him inside.*

A player can becomes too aware of fights. If he does, his hockey performance will suffer.

> *You can't be sitting around, skating around the ice anticipating a fight all the time. You can't be sitting... It takes away a lot from your game when your looking for a fight all the time.*

This quote describes the distraction a person will experience if he is thinking about fighting all the time. Earlier it was noted that players try to intimidate others for this same reason: to try to distract their minds from the game.

Players may also think about possible fights due to their own subjective inclinations, i.e., the mood some players bring to the game or play the game in. Whatever the source, when players think about fights happening their concentration on the game often decreases, and thus their performance does also. To 'take away' from their game one must 'take away' from their thought about the game.

This preparation does not occur just when a fight is a real possibility, i.e., when a player expects to get into a fight in the near future. It may also occur when the player is removed from the reality of the hockey environment. One player described his thoughts as if he was preparing himself for an expected fight, and then told of his feelings as he did this:

> *Well, I can tell you right now even my heart, you're heart starts to pound a little bit, like when you think about a fight or something I find that. My hands will sweat a bit, and you'll, you just... Everything starts speeding up, even when you think about it. I can, you can almost say, you almost feel like you are in a fight. Like you can get yourself pumped up, even just thinking about it. I've done that lots of times, where I've got myself pumped up, and then I got to say, "Ok, calm down, its not going to happen."*

Players 'almost feel like they are in a fight' because of the detail involved in this mental thought. This reaction is the result of the thoughts the player has and the meaning these thoughts have for him as a hockey player, within the context of the game. In another environment or to a different person, these thoughts could have a totally different affect. The reaction of the body is automatic, and players at times get carried away with these thoughts. They 'find themselves' with sweaty palms, racing hearts, and a pounding in their heads, i.e., they are 'pumped up.'

> *Yeah, its more a daydreaming stage sure. So its just like I say, if your watching a show, and you get carried away with the show, and you find yourself, you look down and your fist is clenched cause... you know, like I've seen that before, sure.*

Players reported that often they are not even aware that they are dwelling on these thoughts at first. It may be several minutes before they realize what they've been thinking of. It is by changing these thoughts and consciously directing them elsewhere, away from the possibility of a fight, that players change these bodily feelings. These bodily

experiences can be stopped, providing that this new area of thought does not cause these same autonomous reactions. One player described how he tried to alter his thoughts when he 'found himself' thinking about fighting.

> *Well you just kind of say, "Ok, now just relax. Your game is more of a skating game. You should be concentrating more on scoring goals, and leave the other stuff..."*

Some players are more aware of this possibility than others. They have a greater tendency to think about fighting. Included in this group are those who bring to the game a desire to fight, or to 'get someone' and those who play with a great deal of desire and intensity. There are a few rare players who seem to be angry and mad all the time when playing hockey.

> *There are guys that are just, their characteristics, their make-up, they're just the kind of guys that have a tendency to get into fights... and then there's your guys that like to get into fights all the time, they're going to be involved in fights...*

When players bring to the game anger or a desire to get into a fight, they experience an awareness of the possibility of a fight to a far greater degree. When this desire is not present, the awareness of a fight is experienced on a more sporadic basis. These feelings of anger may be totally unrelated to the game itself.

- *Like before I used to fight as, a couple of years ago if I was in a bad mood or something, I'd more than likely fight then, just to get it off my chest, whatever was bothering me. It didn't even have to do with hockey.*

This player went on to describe a situation where he had come to the game in a bad mood, with a desire to get into a fight. He was aware of this possibility from the start. However the intensity and competitive nature of the game were such that he 'lost himself' in the game. His awareness of fighting gradually receeded into the back of his mind, and he ended up not fighting anyone. The mood one brings to the game is not all pervasive, and in this case the game 'mood' was stronger.

Sometimes a player will see a fight developing before it occurs. He might perceive the intentions of the other player(s) to get into a fight with him, or he might decide to fight someone else-perhaps because of what they've done to him. In such circumstances the possibility becomes the reality. Players don't simply expect or think in the back of their mind that a fight might occur, they know that a fight is going to happen in the very near

future. Not surprisingly, this is not lived very differently from the possibility of a fight. This reality is experienced similarly to the possibility, except that the latter occurs in the mind and can be stopped by altering one's conscious intentions, whereas the former occurs in the body in the lived world. The possible is made real when it is attended to in one's consciousness. The more real this possibility becomes, the more these thoughts dominate one's consciousness. One player described how the possible became real and vivid once he decided to get into a fight:

> *I suppose that when I knew that I had to take this guy, I just, to myself, I'd even say to myself, "Ok, Dave, here we go, now you know what to do." And in, I guess in your mind you've got a picture of, what you want to do is you want to get the jump on the guy, and hold on, and get a good grip, and keep pumping away. And I've got almost a vision, a mental picture inside, of me grabbing the guy, and just my arm going like a piston type of thing. And you know that beforehand.*

This vision is first experienced only as a possibility. It becomes real as it is maintained in one's mind and dominates one's consciousness. When it exists only in the back of one's mind it is not as likely to become real. But when it comes to the 'front' of one's mind, i.e., is consciously intended, and when it stays there, either as an intention or as an expectation, there is a great chance that this possibility will become real. The possibility can become so vivid and real in the player's mind that it blinds and biases his perception of reality. When this occurs the person reacts to the possibility as opposed to the reality. This is a prejudice, and is similar to the concept of labelling discussed earlier. With both labels and prejudices, the player responds to thoughts and feelings as they exist in his mind rather than as they exist in the lived world.

N. Summary: The Game

Fights in hockey are experienced as part of the game of hockey. Players derive meaning and interpret their lived experience from within this context. Since fights are 'part of the game', the elements of fights, as well as the specific events leading up to them, are experienced from within this context. Certain elements of the game impact on this experience among those general ones were the concentration that occurs in the game, the altered rules and norms of the game (both formal and informal), the feeling of the game, the body contact and the conflict with other teams.

More specific game elements include the intimidation and frustration often present. Intimidation is instrumentally valuable because it puts players 'off their stride'. It takes their concentration from the game, and it causes them to hesitate and/or to play with decreased desire. Players who are intimidated generally don't play as well as they might otherwise.

Players intimidate others both by words and deeds. They do this by trying to instill fear into the opposition. This may be fear of pain, injury, humiliation and/or embarassment. Fear is instilled because players expect action from others that will harm them. This harm may be either physical or psychological. When a player expects this, he fears it will come to pass. Fear results from the way he anticipates and perceives the behavior of others. It is not a quantifiable entity available for objective perception.

To be intimidated is frustrating. Players want to act, but fear the retaliations that may result, so they don't. The intimidated person is thus thwarted from achieving his desires. This thwarting of one's intentions is associated with frustration. With intimidation, however, it is a player's own fear that hinders him, not fatigue or the physical behavior of others. Since others are perceived as being the cause of this fear, they are blamed for the frustration that results from it.

The person who is intimidating others experiences a feeling of superiority and confidence in himself and his abilities. Others are intimidated by him, and give him freedom on the ice. He may not be hindered physically as much during the game. He recognizes that this results from his own intimidating actions, and feels confident and superior in his ability to 'handle things.'

The game of hockey provides an environment where fights exist. Players are aware of this and experience this as an awareness that fights are possible. This awareness exists 'in the back of your mind' while playing the game of hockey, as well as periodically for several days or more before the actual game, during the dressing room prior to the game, between shifts on the ice, etc. Specific situational and individual factors affect this awareness. Some players may be more disposed to this awareness, those that 'look for fights' for example. Rough, tough games, or games where players are trying to intimidate others, are likely to cause players to become more aware of this possibility. This awareness includes specific imagery of the details and technique that a player may employ,

as well as a more general state of physiological arousal that occurs automatically with these thoughts. Normally this possibility isn't explicated in one's consciousness but exists 'in the back of one's mind.' But as this awareness increases, the details and imagery involved manifest themselves. It is as this awareness is made conscious and attended to for a period of time that the possible becomes real. This possibility is different from the real only in that one exists in the player's mind, while the other exists in the lived world.

These game elements were described in some detail with the intent of clarifying and explicating them so their affect on the experience of fighting in hockey will be recognized. These are obviously not all the elements of the game of hockey that influence and impact on the experience of fighting, but they represent those factors that seemed most prominant from discussions with the subjects of this study. Undoubtedly more factors will become clarified during the remaining analysis. Having concluded this general description of some of the influences of the game of hockey on fighting, the next task is to describe chronologically the events leading up to a fight in hockey and how these are experienced.

VII. EVENTS LEADING UP TO A FIGHT

This section will create an understanding of the events leading up to a fight as they are typically experienced by those engaged in them. The typical events a player would normally experience as he begins to 'get into' a fight will be described. But as one player noted: *"Not all fights break out that way"*, implying that there are times when this typical pattern of events is disrupted or occurs differently. In such instances a fight occurs 'atypically', in which case an understanding of the typical events will illuminate how and why these atypical events might take place, and how they might be experienced. The following discussion is intended to describe these typical patterns of events, and where appropriate the atypical patterns of events, in order to understand both better. The discussion will proceed in a chronological manner from the events in a game which make fights a possibility through to the events which make them a reality.

A. Provocations

> *...A cheap shot... all the time, almost. Oh yeah,... its usually a cheap shot. Like if a guy has been running around and hitting a lot of your team-mates and then he comes and hits you, and gives you the cheap shot, then you're ready... you know..."O.K., he's been doing this to everyone on the team." Most things are instigated by a cheap shot, whether its at the beginning of a game. If a guy gives you a cheap shot, say a high stick to the head,... then you're gonna remember that. You'll hit him hard into the boards, and then you'll come off... and you'll be looking and maybe something will happen. I've never been in a fight just where nothing's happened... where there wasn't something that led up to it.*

When asked what is the cause of fights, one player responded with the above comment. This response is not unique, the majority of players interviewed in this study have made similar comments. Cheap shots which occur before the fight are used to explain and make sense of the fight itself. Cheap shots are seen as provocations, and provocations are seen as and act as 'causes' of a fight in the eyes of hockey players. A central and essential part of the experience of fighting in hockey is the provoking incident (Also known as: cheap shot, taking liberties, sticking him and running him). The term provocation is a label I have supplied to categorize and describe this phenomena. Fights rarely occur apart and disconnected from these types of preceeding events.

Cheap shots make fights possible. They expand the player's awareness of the possibility of a fight. They occur within the game, and usually lead from the game and into

a fight. If someone takes a cheap shot at a player, then the player becomes more aware of the possibility that this player might want to fight him. His attention begins to shift from the game. He begins to think about a possible fight. He is no longer totally immersed in the game, but is partly 'in' the game and partly 'in' a 'mental fight'. It is possible to draw someone from the game into a fight by provoking him. An illustration of how cheap shots lead into fights is provided by the following comment.

> *I was standing in front of the net waiting, I think the puck was at the point and I was waiting for a deflection, and the guy cross-checked me down from behind, hit me pretty hard. The puck went into the corner, so I got up, and that's when I, you know, I'd had a couple of confrontations with this guy, so that's when I decided that I'd do something about it, and I hit him hard in the corner...*

The above situation involved a cross-check, which the player perceived to be a cheap shot. He had already had a couple of 'confrontations (i.e., provocations) with this guy', and hence was alerted to and aware of the possibility of a fight. This provocation led to a confrontation in the corner, where a fight resulted. The possibility of a fight was on this player's mind. He was consciously aware of this possibility because of the previous cheap shots that he had received.

There are however, as noted, some fights that don't appear to begin according to this pattern. This may not be because the fight started differently, but because the observer failed to notice the cheap shot(s) that inevitably did occur. The players aren't always aware of what 'starts' fights, even the ones they get into.

There are several reasons for this. Provocations, like most behavior in hockey, are social events that are subjectively interpreted. They have a certain meaning to them which varies based on the subjective stance of the person involved. It is how this behavior is subjectively perceived, rather than objectively perceived, that is most influential in whether it is labelled a 'cheap shot'. The following section will briefly discuss how cheap shots are perceived and thereafter the characteristics of these behaviors.

One general delimiter of a cheap shot is that it can't be a legal hit. Players are expected to be tough enough to take hits within the rules, no matter how hard these hits are.

> *That's why hockey is such a weird game. You can get into a fight, and then next shift you can hit a guy as hard as you can into the boards, and he'll fall down, but he won't even think anything of it, because it was legal, or it was*

within the rules of the game.

This illustrates the altered norms that create the meanings and understandings of behavior as lived by hockey players. The expectation that hockey players be tough enough to 'take it' is one of the 'hallmarks' of hockey (Vaz, 1982, ch. 4). This norm prescribes that legal hits (within the rules), no matter how hard they are, even if players get hurt or injured, must be accepted without an unusual response.

> *Like if a guy hits me really hard or something, then, like if I feel it, I'll just get up and try to keep going. But if its dirty or something...*

The unfinished thought is that if the hit is dirty it is a cheap shot, and then he'll likely do something about it. Body contact and hits within the rules are justified by those rules, while behavior outside these rules is open to a more subjective interpretation. Dirty (i.e., illegal) plays, such as 'sticking' players (illegally spearing or poking players with the blade of the stick), 'running' players (taking too many steps or 'runs' at a player before body checking him), 'back-stabbing' players (slashing, hooking or cross checking from behind), or other dirty tactics that run the whole gamut of infractions in the rule book (and some outside the rules), are most often perceived as provoking. The reason that all illegal behavior isn't perceived this way has been discussed by Vaz (1982, ch. 5) He noted that some rule violation is considered inevitable in hockey. The informal rules allow for and even prescribe a certain degree of illegal behavior not allowed by the formal rules. Many cheap shots are accepted—not condoned or liked, but accepted—according to these informal rules. The more severe behaviors that are not appropriate even by these informal rules are almost always perceived as provoking.

It is not the overt behavior that causes it to be labelled as a provocation, but rather the affect this behavior has on the individual, and his response to it. For example, slashing is a common part of the game that the informal rules generally prescribe as 'part of the game'. But a slash by a goalie that results in serious injury is interpreted differently.

> *I was skating in front of the net one time, and all of a sudden the goalie stick came up and hit me right in the face. Well I was knocked unconscious for a couple of seconds, and it ripped my nostril almost completely off. Like whose to say if this goalie did it on purpose or not?*

This incident resulted in a fight. This behavior was considered inappropriate, because of the pain and injury incurred, regardless of the circumstances or intentions involved.

Some behavior may be seen as provoking even though it does not involve any physical contact between the apponents. This takes the form of 'verbal shots' rather than 'physical shots'. Referred to as 'yapping' or mouthing off, this behavior is sometimes ignored, sometimes responded to with similar verbal abuse, and occasionally leads to physical abuse and fights.

> *...it was in the playoffs eh, and I took a penalty, and I was skating by, and he started going "Ha ha, way to go loser. Take out the golf clubs..." and I just turned around and pushed him and said "come on!" you know...*

This verbal provoking may occur in combination with physical acts, or separately. Either may lead to a fight. Physical abuse is an attempt to reduce one's physical performance or stature on the ice, by making the person intimidated. Verbal abuse is aimed at decreasing one's psychological stature or performance, i.e., at decreasing one's projected image or reputation. It may also be directed towards reducing the team image or reputation.

A further type of provocation results from one's way of acting, through one's way of 'being' in the world. In this case no specific or obvious act can be isolated as a cheap shot or a provoking incident. The person's whole demeanor and bearing is interlaced with subtle behaviors which are interpreted by others as hostile and antagonistic. Looking a guy right in the eyes, or 'staring him down' can be one subtle type of behavior that might be perceived as a provocation. One player discussed starting at an opponent, and commented:

> *Well, your taking a chance, because a lot of guys will take that as an "allright, you want to go?" Like "you want to go?" drop their gloves and...*

Players rate what is acceptable based on what they and their peers give and take. Fairness is a socially determined phenomena. What the group defines as fair is what they'll accept without retaliation. As Vaz (1982) clearly points out, the informally defined norms usually do not correspond closely to the formally sanctioned rules of the game (Vaz, 1982, ch. 5). For example, hooking is often accepted as 'part of the game', whereas but-ending is usually not acceptable, yet both are illegal according to the formal rules of the game. Players define their subjective individual limits within the boundaries of these group norms.

Despite the existence of formal and informal norms, the influence of the individual in determining how these acts are perceived is greatest. Individual characteristics include a

variety of factors. One of these is the arousal level players are experiencing.

> *When you play hockey you're in a very highly aroused state, in a lot of circumstances. It varies... it constantly changes, especially when somebody sticks you. You just... anger is your first reaction.*

The intense and emotionally arousing nature of the game has been discussed previously. Players get very excited, and in this state they perceive the behavior of others differently. Behavior that would normally be ignored is now perceived as if it were an uncalled for provocation. When players are excited, they act more spontaneously. They think less, and react more. This reaction is the result of their excited state, and does not result from the actions of the opponent. Players who become aroused react automatically when interpreting the behavior of others, and within the hockey context this means that these behaviors are generally perceived as provoking.

> *And you're already so pumped up, cause you're losing the game and everything, and you're trying so hard that when they take that extra liberty to give you the slash back...then its automatically, its just right away...*

Certain periods of a game may be particularily exciting or arousing, as in the above case where a player's team was losing. This player was trying extra hard as a result of this situation, and the cheap shot was perceived as uncalled for.

One player noted that the arousing nature of a fight may predispose players to react to subsequent behavior as if it was provoking.

> *He gets into a fight, and then... fights one guy, and then it... the fight's over, he gets up, everything's allright. But then somebody on the other team calls him a name, "Oh yeah, Turnbull you stupid geek!", tries to get on his case. He's already frustrated, he's already had a fight so he's in that type of mood where you know, bang anything else "O.K., lets go!"...*

Having just been involved in one fight, a player will still be intense and emotionally aroused. Further provocations, even if only verbal, while already in such a mood, may be perceived as provoking.

When a player is fatigued from a long shift, he may also interpret the behavior of others as being provoking.

> *...If you're at the end of the shift, and someone gives you a cheap shot, and you're tired already cause you're trying to get off, you know... it frustrates you even more towards the end of the shift.*

When tired, the actions of others are more of a hindrance, and are more frustrating.

Because players are fatigued, provocations detract from their game more than when they are fresh and strong and capable of ignoring these hindrances. Because they hinder players more, they are seen as provoking.

Most players cheap shot others occasionally, but most also recognize that they don't have to. They know they are not a necessary unavoidable part of the game. Because of this, when players receive a cheap shot, they believe it was intentional. A player's knowledge that they are avoidable, based on his own experiences, influences how he reacts to them. As noted, if a cheap shot is intentional, it indicates that one player doesn't respect the other. He isn't giving him the room (freedom) that is required. Some players adopt an attitude so that all potentially provoking acts are perceived as cheap shots. This occurs regardless of their subjective feelings at the time, or the situational influences of the game.

> *....once anybody ever does anything back he's bang, his gloves are off within two seconds if that, or in two tenths of a second, cause once you retaliate towards... there's certain guys you know, you retaliate towards him you're in a fight, because its automatic, its automatic, ...*

Cheap shots may be intentional, accidental, and/or automatic for the players who do them. If they are intentional, the intent is usually to intimidate the other person(s). When they are automatic they likely reflect the player's frustrations from the game, and/or the intensity of the game itself. Accidental ones occur due to the nature of the game. The high speeds, the body contact, the presence of sticks, etc., all produce an environment where accidental collisions occur frequently. Not all cheap shots are intentional but, as noted above, the intentionality isn't as important as the severity of the provocation.

Not all cheap shots can be attributed to the fast pace of the game, the body contact, and/or the frustrations players experience. Some are clearly intentional. This section will discuss in greater detail the intentional cheap shot, more specifically a kind of cheap shot that players often refer to as 'taking liberties'. Taking liberties refers to taking advantage of other players, i.e., hitting them more than is required. A variety of types of behaviors may be used to take liberties with others. The key is that these behaviors are performed more intensely or frequently than is necessary. Some illustrations will help illuminate this:

> *Ok, he'll hit somebody into the boards, and he's the type of guy who always*

gets a little extra, gets that little extra shot as he's skating away, slash in the ankles or whatever.

This comment describes a player who was well known and feared for his toughness and fighting skills. His reputation alone was enough to intimidate most players. They would hesitate when playing him, and seldom provoked him. Despite this, he continued to 'always get that little extra shot'.

...off the face-offs I'd stick him. But when I, like I never really hit him illegally, but when I saw him and I could hit him cleanly I put a little bit more into it.

This player also refers to taking liberties. The player he describes was obviously intimidated by him, yet he continued to 'stick him' and to 'put a little bit more into it' when he could. This involved putting a little bit more than he normally would and a little bit more than he needed to into his hits. He did not need to put as much into these hits as he did because the player was already intimidated and fearful of him.

Taking liberties implies the existence of a feeling of dominance towards the opponent. When dominance is established or an intimidating relationship exists, players feel free from the retaliations of the opponent. A player takes liberties because he knows he won't be retaliated against.

Like you got to show, like its, its kind of like you back down, and they got a little bit of an advantage from it. They can feel that they can take more liberties on your team...

Liberties are taken, not to create a feeling of intimidation in the other person, but because there already exists this feeling of intimidation. The existence of this feeling motivates players to cheap shot their opponents more. When a player knows he won't be retaliated against, he has more freedom, and he uses this to continue to provoke his opponent. Initially provocations are done to intimidate others. But once someone is intimidated, these are continued in order to maintain this relationship of dominance. The above quote makes this clear by what is said next: *"...the thing to do is to try not to let them take any liberites with you."* Players 'try not to let their opponents take liberties' by retaliating back, and trying to show that they won't back down. They know that even if they do back down, or hesitate, or give the other player(s) or team more freedom, the cheap shots are going to continue. In fact, they might even increase. Some opponents keep 'ragging him' even after a player has backed off and given them all the room and 'freedom' they need. It

is because backing down does not usually cause the cheap shots to stop that players feel they must stand up for themselves at all times. They don't want to get run out of the rink, which will be the result if these don't cease.

There is a tendency for players to cheap shot others more than usual when they don't expect a retaliation. Some players who wouldn't normally provoke others do so when retaliations are unlikely. One situation where this may occur frequently is when the referees are close by.

> *There's a lot of that, you give the guy a shot, and he gives you a shot back, some guys will do that, cause the linesman will be there.*

The implication is that because the referees are there to stop fights from occurring, players are secure from retaliations when they are close. Because players feel safe, they aren't hindered or intimidated by a fear of getting hurt. They may take more runs at others because of this lack of fear.

In summary, there is ample proof that provocations are a perceived cause of fighting in hockey, and that players experience these often when playing the game. Players consistently reported that the cause of a fight was perceived to be acts of other players. Rarely did they openly admit to or discuss their own part in the initiation of a fight, except as the person who 'stood up' when he was wronged or treated unfairly. Because provoking incidents are frequent, and because these often result in fights, fights and potential fight situations provide a pervasive underlying current to the game. How players perceive and respond to these provoking incidents is influenced by the norms of hockey and the subjective state of the individual. These norms are constantly changing and adapting. This is also true for the players—their perceptions of what is and what is not a provocation are in a constant state of flux. The variety of factors which influences how the individual internalizes these norms has already been discussed. Among these are the formal rules against fighting, the intensity level and roughness of the game, and the disposition or mood that the individual brings to the game (or develops while in the game). Because of these, it is not possible to objectively define what a cheap shot is. Rather, this section has attempted to subjectively describe how these are experienced by hockey players, and how these lead up to fights.

B. Limits

> *...and so meanwhile this guy is about to fight me, and I had just got hit, and at that time I just...you know... I was steaming. I'd had enough.*

Although fights often appear to happen instantaneously, a closer examination reveals that players experience a sequence of generally recognizable events which occur between the provocation and the fight. Chronologically, the next event after a provocation in this sequence of events is the experience of 'reaching a limit'. This section will examine these limits as they are lived during fighting in hockey.

Limits are not something all players are conscious of in the sense of being able to say "He went past the limits of what I decided was acceptable behavior". Most players discussed this limit in terms of a feeling that the opponent's behavior was inappropriate or unacceptable. A typical comment would be that: 'He had no right to be sticking his glove in my face'. This feeling became so strong that it motivated them to do something. The limit reached, this decision to 'do something about it' was often experienced subconsciously. That is, the response happens without the player having to 'consciously decide' that the provocation was inappropriate. Whether the limit is reached consciously or whether the player responded unconsciously, these usually appear to be instantaneous decisions. A player receives a cheap shot, and right away he gives one back. This happens without thinking, as the following comment makes clear.

> *....You're in the boards, you don't even know who it is, you hit him, and then he slashes you, and then all of a sudden you're in the fight, but you never realized it was the biggest guy on their team, or whatever....*

This response has been described by several players as a 'natural response' or as occurring due to 'instinct'. Players describe it this way because they are not consciously aware of the decision-making process involved. They experience this decision as an instinctive reaction. It happens suddenly and without any 'conscious volition', and because of this, they believe that it happens instinctively or naturally.

Previously it was noted that some behavior is seen as provoking and other behavior is not, even when the appearance of the behavior is the same to an objective observer. The defining or labelling of provoking acts rests totally on the individual, who derives these meanings from within the context of his experiences within his game. Players have vastly different limits to what they'll take without responding. Some are

ready to fight all the time, i.e., the person who is looking for an 'excuse' to fight. This player sets his limits so low that even a dirty look is a sufficient reason to fight. Others seem able or willing to put up with more cheap shots than most without responding. These players are likely to be the ones who will allow themselves to be intimidated. They are rare, however. The majority of players who reach their limit will respond in some way. There are not very many players who will take cheap shots all night long and not do something about them.[20] Some quotes will help illuminate this limit.

> *...and that defenceman always gives you a shot in the ankle when you try and break around him, well by about the fifth time that he gives you....*

The 'fifth time' mentioned here is actually a very high limit compared to what most players will put up with:

> *So there was all of a sudden this guy, after the face-off, just cross-checking me, not even paying attention to the play at all, just skating after me and cross-checking me in the side of the arm. Well by the third time I kind of get the idea and turn around, and its, just happens like that...*

This example involved a situation where one player was obviously and intentionally trying to provoke the opponent. The opponent was not willing to put up with very much. His limits were lower in this situation than in the first example.

> *Well this guy who's, he was a big guy but he wasn't that, ...he wasn't that aggressive. But every time I'd come at him he'd put his stick up, and I guess I just said it was enough, so we dropped our gloves....*

This 'saying its enough' indicates what the lived experience of reaching a limit is like. A player decides he has taken enough cheap shots, and that he is not going to put up with any more without doing something. This player decided he had taken enough high sticks, and when his limit was reached he responded by fighting the opponent. A limit is experienced as a decision to do something. When one's limit is reached, one no longer passively accepts or takes the actions of others directed at them. A player has had enough, and wants to do something to stop these provocations.

For a while the annoying nature of provocations may be accepted with no response, but as the tension builds up so does the player's desire to retaliate. The tension

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[20]This is supported when it is noted that even if players are intimidated and hesitant, they desire to act. Although intimidated by fear into not acting, their limit has been reached, and they want to respond. They don't because their fear is stronger than their desire to act.

exists initially in the back of one's mind. It might be localized as an anger towards one specific player, or it might be a general anger or arousal. It builds up slowly or quickly, as more provoking incidents occur, until the desire to do something dominates one's attention. At first players are often not aware of this. When he realizes that these cheap shots are not going to stop unless he puts a stop to them, he will be on the brink of acting. When he receives a particularly severe cheap shot, he will likely respond.

Limits imply that players can do something about the behavior of others. This is validated by comments that refer to the 'self-policing' nature of the game. If there were no recourse to responding to the behavior of others, if it had no apparent results or had deleterious results, these responses would not be forthcoming. In university (vs. junior) hockey, the limits to what players accept without retaliating are generally higher, due to the more severe penalties for fighting in university hockey. If the penalties were even higher, the limits to what people accept would probably increase accordingly.

Coincident with the fact that a player's perception of cheap shots varies across different times and situations, his limit to what he'll take also varies across different times and situations. One player described a hypothetical situation wherein someone might lower his limits due to the mood he is in before or during a particular game.

> *...he just took too many things all at once. Maybe his wife or something, or he wasn't getting along with his brother, or he phoned his mom, earlier on in the day. And he just said, "Well today, I'm going to go out, and I'm not going to take anything from anybody. And I'm going to go out and play this game, and if anybody gives me one sort of...one bad taste at all, well they're going to, I'm going to give it right back".*

This player might pre-set his limits to what he would take because of his mood. A variety of factors, both within and external to the game, can affect this subjective determination.

Cheap shots often cause pain for the player receiving them. When this happens players report that invariably their limit is reached, and they want to respond. Pain often leads to anger. Players get mad when exposed to things painful to them. Pain causes the limit to be reached sooner. A provocation that causes no pain may be ignored, but an apparently similar (i.e., objectively) provocation that causes pain for the recipient is not. Pain, as Buytendijk (1961) notes, creates a desire to abandon one's body to the pain (p. 26). This desire to withdraw from the source of the pain is similar to the experience of reaching one's limit. When one's limit has been reached one desires to withdraw from the

annoying provocations and make them stop. Players know that they won't stop of their own accord, and that they must make them stop. They usually do this by retaliating back.

There are times when this limit might be cognitively determined as opposed to experientially determined. The norms that define how to respond also contain information about the expected behavior of others. They may suggest, for example, that cheap shots from a player with a 'reputation' (past history) of intimidating behavior will continue, and that these noxious stimuli will not stop unless some action is taken. With this norm present, some players consciously choose to respond before their experiential limit is reached, in expectation of continued cheap shots. One player explains this:

> *You're going to have to live with him constantly ragging on you, and giving you little cheap shots here, little cheap shots there. But when he gives you a cheap shot, and then you turn around and give him one right back, ...then he's going to say, "OK, Well I did that to him, and he doesn't take it as easily." And he might even do it again, but then if you do it....hit him again, or retaliate again, then you know, eventually he's going to get the gist of the matter, and just go, "OK, he's too much of a hassle to play with anymore. I'm going to pick on somebody else."*

This player suggests that at times he responds immediately in order to communicate that he isn't going to 'take' it without retaliating.

Some set their limits so they respond immediately to provocations from others. In this case, the player is trying to create an image of himself that shows that he won't take any cheap shots from others. To do this he retaliates immediately. He doesn't want to take anything, and he wants others to know this. He communicates this by showing how his limits are set. Another player described this as 'setting the tone'.

> *Another situation is...where maybe a guy tries to take advantage of you, ...so you come right back at him just to set the tone, "Look, you know I'm not one to be messed with."*

Further evidence for the existence of these decisions comes from players who reported that they would sometimes try to increase their limits to what they would take during a game. In a tense situation where they had received some cheap shots, they would try not to respond automatically to these. They reported trying to control these responses, trying to resist this desire to respond without thinking.

> *You can say to yourself as much as you want that, "I can't take a penalty, I can't take a penalty, I can't take a penalty", but all of a sudden a guy runs you, and so you know later on in the game you run him back type of thing. Maybe you don't stray from it right away, you try not to...*

This player is describing an example of this. He may try to resist the initial urge or desire to retaliate, and is occasionally successful. But later on he might play the person extra hard, or run him because of this earlier incident. In the short term players seem able to alter their responses, but over a longer period their more habitual responses dominate. The effort required to overcome this desire to retaliate automatically is worth noting. This illustrates the extent to which the norm of retaliation has been inculcated by the players.

At other times, players may want to do something, but they can't due to the circumstances of the game. It might be a very close game, or the playoffs, and a fight and/or penalty may jeopardize the team's chances . In this case the desire to do something exists 'in the back of one's mind' until a more appropriate time when the player can 'get even'. In these situations they adjust their limits and restrain their desire to respond similarly to above.

Implied in these variances in limits is an awareness of the game situation. Players are aware of these situational factors and their influence on the game, and on how they ought to respond to provocations within these situations. They alter their behavior accordingly, as this player notes:

> *There's certain situations where you can be under control, like you have to be under control....like in a playoff game.*

This player next described a particular example of being in control that involved one of the bigger guys on the other team roughing up a teammate. His comment illustrates how he altered his response to the situation:

> *So I just went in to sort of give him a shot. And one of their smaller guys came up to me and cross-checked me across the head, and so I just hit him back, but I knew I couldn't fight—it was the first period. You jeopardize your team.*

Normally a cross-check to the head would be a pretty serious provocation, especially for this player, who was known for being a tough, fearless opponent. But this event occurred in the first period of a university hockey game, and in university hockey players are thrown out of the game for fighting. Because it was 'still the first period' and the fact that to fight in the first period and get thrown out would 'jeopardize his team', this player 'couldn't fight'. His reaction was to hit him back with his gloves on, and in this way not risk a fighting penalty (the players usually must drop their gloves to receive a fighting penalty). His limit

was reached, and he had a desire to do something, but he chose not to fight because of the circumstances. Instead he chose a behavior that was less likely to jeopardize his team.

It has been suggested that reaching a limit involves a decision to do something. These decisions are occurring, because individuals don't respond the same way in similar situations, nor do similar individuals respond the same way across a variety of situations. We've described some of the subjective internal states that seem to influence this limit, and the different in game situations that alter how players set their limits. These decisions often occur in advance of the actual behavior. Players are aware of the norms and values which permeate the reality of hockey. Their conscious acceptance of these norms and values is a type of decision. When they accept these values they don't accept the cognitive knowledge these imply, but rather the experiential possibilities they expect to face as a result of these values.

For example, players are taught the value of toughness. They are taught to stand up for themselves, and in these learning experiences these decisions are embodied.

> *It's sort of like in a situation where you can fight. You're sort of schooled to the thought that you shouldn't let people get away with it.*

This 'schooling' involves learning proper and expected behavior, not the abstract theoretical knowledge this behavior is based upon. This 'applied schooling' stresses that one shouldn't let people get away with provoking them. It stresses not only that one 'get them back', but also when and how one should do this. One's response is already dictated through these learning experiences well before the actual situation occurs. Thus players appear to be and think they are responding instinctively or automically—yet in fact these are culturally learned responses that have become automatic habits over time.

Some players may reach a limit and not be able to act for a long time. If intense enough, these desires to retaliate may last a long time. For example, one player reported carrying a grudge towards another player for a very long period of time. The length of time seems related to the severity of the cheap shot. The opponent had knocked several of his teeth out. Obviously this player's limit was reached, and he had a very strong desire to retaliate, but he couldn't because he was being carried off the ice in a very dazed condition. The desire to retaliate was carried in the back of his mind for over two years.

When the teams finally met again after this long period,[21] he expressed his continued anger and a desire to get even. [22]

This 'grudge', carried for so long, couldn't have existed in this person's conscious mind all this time. It was there, but when it was not attended to it was as if it didn't exist. He might not have thought about it for weeks or months. But for several days and weeks prior to this match, he had been thinking back on this cheap shot, and about his desire to get even. He had in this way rekindled his anger towards the opponent. A fight did occur when they played each other again, despite this long separation between provocation and retaliation.

C. Responses

Within the game of hockey, there are basically three distinct types of responses available to players who have reached a limit after being provoked. These responses are defined and dissemminated through the social norms permeating the game. Players adopt or reject these responses based on their internalized value system which is also clearly influenced by the values of the hockey culture. These responses have been labelled as: (1) 'ignoring the provocation', (2) 'backing down', or (3) 'standing up'. There are a variety of behaviors that comprise the players' reponses to provocations, but most of these can be categorized into one of these three general types. All of these have been examined in this analysis.

Ignoring the Provocation

> *Yeah, well, they try and hit the guy back cleanly again... if a guy does something like that you can wait your time, if not that game next game, to get this guy lined up and give him a good hard shot.*

One response that is adopted by a few players is to not let oneself become intimidated, yet to not retaliate back from the provocations of others. Instead they try to retaliate back by playing them as hard as they can within the rules. They are channelling

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[21]This was because the teams were in different leagues—this rematch was an exhibition game.
[22]This information comes from 'word of mouth' of the players, and was gathered in the Participant Observation part of my study—no interviews discussed this event.

their energy and desire to retaliate into their play, by playing harder and with more intensity. These players want to play within the rules, and feel that they can 'get them back' without going outside these rules.

> *But I don't go out of my way to bully somebody or give them a cheap shot or anything like that. If I can get them clean I'd rather get them that way.*

These players take care to project the right image. They don't want to appear as if they are backing down, or give the impression that they are intimidated. Instead they try to project an image of "I don't want to fight, but I'm not going to be intimidated. I'll fight if I have to, but I won't be goaded into a fight to show how tough I am." Few players adopt this response. This style of play was discussed earlier as one of the unique 'games' that some players had 'made their own' in the section on roles/images.

Players accomplish this by their style of behavior on the ice, i.e., by playing as hard as they can within the rules. They don't hesitate, they don't give the opponent freedom, and they don't back down in the game or during the little skirmishes and confrontations that often occur. They aren't afraid to fight, but they don't want to fight. Thus they don't initiate things outside the rules. Instead they focus and concentrate on playing their game better, more proficiently and more intensely. These players aren't trying to develop or prove their tough image by how they respond in these situations. Instead they project their image by their style of play on the ice. Their image is developed and maintained through the way they play the game, and not through how tough they appear during confrontations and intimidating situations.

> *...like John Tonelli. He never looks back, he just goes, he hits as hard as anybody, and he...roughs guys up, not with punches and stuff, but he just does it, and then he doesn't look back, but he puts his head down and he's back into the play....you respect them for how hard they work, and for how tough they are...*

The comment 'you respect them for how tough they are' refers to his tough behavior in the game, outside of provocating situations. This player concluded by noting that he doesn't try to start fights with players like this even though he had a reputation for starting fights. He knew these players wouldn't fight him, because 'they don't have to'. They feel they don't have to fight for the same reason they feel they don't have to play dirty hockey by retaliating back against the rules.

These players depict a security and a confidence in their roles on the ice independent of the evaluations of others. They don't feel a need to prove their toughness by fighting because their confidence and their image are derived from internal evaluations of self worth, not from external evaluations through others. Their self-image is secure and not dependent on the reflected appraisal of others. It resides within them. Thus they aren't threatened by the possibility of a fight, and they feel no need to 'prove' how tough they are. They can back down with impunity.

The above comments 'never looking back' and 'puts his head down' refer to a phenomena often present in these altercations called 'the look' (which will be discussed in detail later). One player 'looks' to assess the intent of the opponent (i.e., does he want to fight?). The 'look' is often seen as a challenge. Players who 'never look back' do so because they don't care what others think, or if others want to fight. They aren't threatened or fearful of this possibility. Players who 'put their heads down' are also indicating that their intentions are focussed on the game. They are showing by this that they don't want to start anything. Their intent is towards the game, hence they 'put their heads down' and get back into the play.

Backing Down

> *In a sense it gives you the physical edge, because you know, "Well, the guy's a chicken shit." Everybody will stick 'em, run him, if the team plays chicken shit, well everybody, "Well we've got all this freedom," you know, everybody can start playing dirty of whatever. You just have that edge, you get that edge over a team.*

In contrast to the person who ignores provocations is the person who does back down from others through being intimidated. Backing down from potential provocations may involve not standing up for oneself as opposed to actively backing down. The expected norm in hockey is that a player will retaliate, that he will 'get him' back. When this doesn't occur players and spectators wonder: "Why didn't he retaliate? Why didn't he get the guy back for that? Why didn't he stand up for himself when challenged? Why did he passively accept those cheap shots?" By not responding as expected and defined by these norms, the player has in effect backed away from the opponent. Not retaliating and not backing down are both interpreted similarly. The answer to these questions, according to the norms of hockey, is that the player is a 'chicken'.

This does not imply that the player doesn't want to stand up for himself and retaliate. As suggested earlier, players often have an internal desire to respond, but the fear from intimidation is greater, and overrides this desire. No player likes to get 'stuck', or have others take cheap shots at him. Most players want to put a stop to this, and most realize that the accepted way to do this is to retaliate and show that they won't passively accept these shots. Players who back down are often divided internally. They have a desire to retaliate, but are thwarted by the fear of the consequences.

Backing down refers to a way of responding to the provocations of others, but it also depicts a stance or an orientation to how the game is played. As noted previously, there is usually a constellation of behaviors which are related and comprise a specific 'role'. This is true for chickens, or those who back down. Players who back down from provocations will often back down from situations where potential provocations are likely to occur, or even from the rough tough hitting of the game.

> *You know he's tough, so you just kind of...usually if a guy whacks you you're going to whack him back, that is all there is to it, like...an ear for an ear type of thing. But he got away with a lot of stuff, especially me, because I was at that time probably about 150 pounds and he was probably about 180 and he was a pretty big boy.*

A player is likely to not only back down from challenges and give others more 'freedom' than he might normally give, but as well his general play is usually more timid. Players who back down will often play a more restrained and reserved style of hockey. They play with less abandonment, and do not 'lose themselves' in the game as much when intimidated. This is because their minds are partially occupied on things other than the game itself. Specifically this includes the potential cheap shots from others, and the possibility of a fight that these thoughts lead to.

Players may respond beforehand to cheap shots. They do this by playing in such a way that they rarely expose themselves to potential provocations. Skating in the center of the ice and rarely going into the corners is one obvious way. This form of 'backing down' occurs before players are provoked to decrease their chances of being provoked.

> *Then there's the other players... they play their game, they try not to get hit, they try to stay in the middle and things... they'll yap at guys, but that's the extent of it.*

One example of this involved a whole team becoming intimidated as a result of their 'policeman' receiving a severe beating in a fight that occurred at the start of the game. One player commented on how he felt after this occurred.

> *...and you feel like almost like, "Oh, no, it's my turn to get out there type of thing." And you feel so intimidated, you know their team's so spirited like, "Come on!" and we were just like intimidated right as soon as that happened.*

This feeling of intimidation caused the desire of his whole team to be lacking. Players didn't even want to go on the ice, let alone play vigorously, or retaliate back against all the cheap shots they were getting. They had no desire to stand up for themselves after their 'tough guy' lost his fight.

A variety of behaviors can be involved in backing down, some obvious, and others more subtle. Even the subtle behavioral cues are noticeable by other players. Several players reported that they could tell when others would back down even before they were provoked.

> *Oh yeah, well I don't know. It's not like the whole world stops and everybody's watching, it's just something you pick up on. You can tell when somebody's not going to go or not.*

The experience of backing down is very unpleasant for players. It is an intimidating experience that often leads to frustration, as discussed earlier. It is also a humiliating experience for those involved. Players may be embarrassed and humiliated because of the image they have portrayed. To back down is to be labelled or categorized as a 'chicken'. This derogatory label comes from doing what others negatively evaluate. When these negative evaluations become known to the player, he often experiences embarrassment. One player described a potential fight which almost occurred off the ice, and the resulting embarrassment he felt from backing down.

> *All of a sudden he wanted to fight me and I walked away from it, and I said, "No, I have no interest in fighting you, this is ridiculous," and thinking to myself, that no matter what happens I'll never do that again, because of the feeling I got from it and all.*

His feelings, as he went on to describe them, included being ostracized from his social group (and in the process losing many of his friends), having to live with a label of himself that wasn't true, and feeling very badly for doing what he felt was the right thing. These negative feelings were so bad that he made a pact that he would never back down again.

Interestingly, these feelings were not present right away, but arose as he became aware of the affect of his behavior on others, and how they subsequently reacted to him.

Some develop a typical patterned response to cheap shots over time. One player succinctly described this patterned response which developed after one of his earliest junior games, in which his team experienced what is literally described as 'being run out of the rink' (with a lot of fights both on and off the ice).

> *I guess it has a serious affect on you as a player, and it took me a long time to realize that, "Hey, I'm 185 pounds, and I'm pretty strong that, they can't run me..." Pretty soon you get a, I guess a response in your head that every time you play against a guy that looks, you know, tough, or that challenges you and stuff you figure, "Well, no way. I don't want no part of this guy," type of thing. It takes you a long time...*

Standing Up

> *I wouldn't say I'm ever the aggressor, in that, its more of a... just kind of defending yourself, sticking up for yourself. You've taken enough cheap shots and... you have to put an end to it.*

The final and most common type of response towards a cheap shot is to retaliate back at the opponent. This behavior is socially defined as the accepted and expected response to cheap shots from others. Players are "pressured" to respond this way from a large number of influences within the hockey culture. These all have the affect of making this the most common response to cheap shots. For a hockey player, these are experienced in terms such as 'standing up for yourself', or 'getting the guy back'. Provocations often result in this behavior, which can be labelled a 'retaliation'. It is through retaliations that players are led even closer to the possibility of a fight. When players respond by backing down or ignoring potential provoking incidents, fights are less likely to occur. But if they respond by retaliating, the possibility of a fight becomes greater.

As noted, players are 'schooled' to the toughness norm, which suggests that they shouldn't let others get away with cheap shots. To 'get away' implies that someone does something, and tries to get away without suffering the consequences of their actions. In hockey, one tries to stick someone, or run them, or cheap shot them, without getting retaliated against. Both the person who sticks someone and the person who gets stuck know that this is not an acceptable part of the game. Because this behavior is unacceptable, there arises an expectation that something be done about it. Players expect

some punishment to be meted out. In the hockey world they quickly learn that they must initiate this, because, as noted previously, the formal control system does not curb such behavior.

To retaliate is a learned and prescribed response, and there are numerous factors that influence this. How are players 'schooled' to this thought? How do these values get into the player's minds, so they influence behavior to such a great degree? One way is through the coach, who very clearly and distinctly teaches not only where to draw the line:

> *I went back to the bench and the coach finally came over to me and said: "Look, don't take that stuff, if he's going to do that, and I've watched you, he's done that three or four times, next time just tell him, if he does that to you again he's going to get it."*

but they also clearly teach how to retaliate, and the importance of this type of behavior to a player's successful career:

> *...once a week our coach __ __ would have us drop our gloves and practice the art of fisticuffs. In games, those who backed down were given a quick escort off the team.*

A further influence comes from a player's peer group. When unsure of how to respond, the timely intercession by peers can help (or hinder, depending upon one's circumstances).

> *He was sticking me at the end of the shift, and I just kind of turned around, and I just heard a few people say "Well go with him, go with him!" and I dropped my gloves,... and he was about 6'3", about 200 pounds, and you know, I'm quite a bit smaller...* [This player was 5'8" and 150 pounds at the time of this fight] *it was the biggest mistake I ever did in my life.*

Retaliating to a provocation is such an expected and taken for granted behavior that hockey players watch for and evaluate others based on how they respond. This is true not only for the person who gave the cheap shot, but for team-mates and coaches from both teams. How one responds to a cheap shot is an important factor in how one establishes and maintains his respect and identity.

Provocations are a challenge. Players know they are being tested, and report a feeling of being 'put on the spot'. They know their behavior is being monitored, and that they must chose the appropriate response. To not retaliate means to not respond to a challenge...

> *...and teams see that. They pick up on that right away. Its not like the whole world stops and everybody watching, its just something you pick up on. You can tell when somebody's not going to go or not.*

When a player responds by retaliating back he is demonstrating that he is willing to 'stand up' for himself. He is showing that he is not going to passively allow others to take liberties with him. To retaliate when others expect him to and when the norms and values prescribe it shows that he is conforming to these pressures. Players retaliate to deter further cheap shots from others. This is a form of 'self-policing' of the game. One player notes:

> *A lot of guys will stick guys if they don't know... if they don't know for sure if you're gonna do anything about it. And if they know you are going to do something about it..*

The unfinished thought is that if they know a player is going to 'do something about it' they will be less likely to provoke him. We've previously noted that often cheap shots are continued unless something is done to stop them. Players will continue to run and stick guys until the punishments for such behavior outweigh the rewards. To retaliate is to draw the line, to show that one's limits have been reached, and to punish the other person so that he won't do it again.

For many, retaliations themselves are perceived as cheap shots. One player may be 'getting the guy back' for a cheap shot he received, yet the person he is getting back may perceive this retaliation as a separate cheap shot totally unrelated to the preceeding provocation that caused it. He may not be aware that he did anything to cause this retaliation, and to him it may thus be interpreted as an uncalled for provoking incident. There are several reasons for this.

Cheap shots or retaliations to cheap shots focus a player's attention to such a degree that the previous game events, including the previous cheap shots, may fade from his consciousness. A player's attention becomes rivetted to the 'cheap shot' that was just received, and he momentarily forgets his own previous acts that may have lead to this retaliation. Further, his cheap shot may have been totally unintentional, or he may have thought of it as being a normal and acceptable 'part of the game'. He may not have been aware that the opponent perceived his behavior as a cheap shot. When a retaliation occurs after such an incident, it is often viewed as if it also occurred for no reason. As well, retaliations don't always occur immediately. Some players wait a while to avoid a 'retaliation penalty', or they prefer to 'pick their spot' before getting the guy back. When these retaliations occur seperated in time from the cheap shot that lead to them, they are

likely to be perceived as provoking.

The above discussion isn't meant to give the false impression that all 'fair' retaliations (those that are clearly given in retaliation for obvious cheap shots), are passively accepted. Players don't always accept the expected 'fair' retaliations from others, even if they know that they 'deserve' them according to this concept of 'fairness'. In fact, the values of hockey prescribe a different response. They suggest that players should always try to get the last shot in. They should always end up on top of the other guy, not ever back down, and not ever let the opponent take liberties with them. This is a very dominant value in hockey, and is far more pervasive and influential than the 'fairness' value. Because of this, players often retaliate to the retaliations of others even when they know that these retaliations are occurring because of their own previous provocations. As we shall see in the next section, it is the influence of this value on behavior that is an important factor in the occurrence of fights in hockey .

D. Escalation

> *If you retaliate its usually a cheap shot... usually its a carry-over affect, you hit him back or he hits you and you say something to him and he says something back,... a lot of times its just a verbal fight but...*

It has been observed that most fights start with incidents that I've chosen to call provocations. Players experience these as cheap shots, as being 'stuck' or 'run'. These lead to what I've termed retaliations, phenomena that players experience as 'getting him back' or 'standing up for yourself' in the lived hockey game. It is through a sequence, (i.e., a series or process) of repeated provocations and retaliations between two or more players that fights develop. Players 'get into' fights from 'being in' the game through repeated and increasingly intense interactions. These interactions involve cheap shots, retaliations, further cheap shots, and further retaliations. This sequence of repeated and increasingly intense interactions I've chosen to call escalation. It is through an escalating interaction of events involving provocations and retaliations that fights arise out of the game of hockey.

To escalate means "to increase in extent, volume, number, amount, intensity or scope" (Websters, 1977, p. 389). The term escalation was chosen to describe this experience because fights arise from the game of hockey, yet provocations are a part of

the game. Provocations that 'lead' into fights begin in the game, and then arise out of the game and into the fight. Fights are much more intense than the game of hockey, and provocations and retaliations are the incidents which lead to this increased intensity. The word escalation aptly describes the increase or rise in the emotional arousal of the player as he begins to leave the reality of the game and get into the reality of a fight. When these confrontations become predominant, when getting back at the other player and standing up for oneself dominate the attention and intentions of the players, the possibility of a fight becomes a reality.

As noted, cheap shots that are not retaliated against and retaliations that are ignored usually don't result in a fight. In referring to a fight that occurred without this escalation, one player commented on how unusual it appeared:

> *Actually what Mark Messier did, you rarely see that eh. Its just... guys are sticking each other, or you'll see a guy get whacked into the boards and then they'll hack each other a bit, and then they'll drop them and then they'll go. But to see an actual challenge where you call the guy on, you rarely see that.*

The above situation involved one player calling another out to center ice and challenging him to a fight before the game began. In the eyes of many subjects, this was a very rare and unusual occurrence. Fights rarely start this way.

This process of escalation can be one sided. It may be experienced by only one of the fighters. One player may get provoked, get mad and angry, and start a fight, while the opponent may not be aware of this response. This accounts for the fact, noted in a previous quote, that *'you might turn away and he drops his gloves on you'*. In most fights, there is a mutual aspect to the escalation, but in this and other infrequent situations, one player might experience these escalating events while his opponent does not.

One player used an analogy to describe this experience. A consideration of this will prove insightful.

> *Its like ... I don't know... I'm trying to think of an example. Like in a car on ice, when you start sliding one way, and you try and correct it, and you start sliding the other way, every slide just starts to get bigger and bigger, until eventually you spin right around in a circle or whatever happens.*

This illustration provides us with clues to some essential features present in an escalating incident. It suggests, for example, that each 'slide' gets bigger than the previous one. In a hockey fight, this can be translated to mean that every provocation becomes a bit larger, a

bit more out of control than the previous one. This is a fundamental quality of an escalating incident. For the interaction to escalate into a fight requires that the cheap shots and retaliations '...increase in extent, volume, intensity or scope'.

This is what happens. Were it not so a fight would not develop. The process would likely stop at the intimidation stage and go no further. This would occur if one person did not respond when he was provoked against, due to his being intimidated.

Provocations and retaliations increase in extent and intensity because of a desire to 'get him back' a little bit extra, i.e., a bit more than the previous cheap shot. A player 'gets him back a little bit extra' intentionally. He is communicating a message when he gives a little bit more than he got.

> *Well, I'm the type of guy where, myself talking, that if he's big and 400 pounds, but if he's going to call my mother a dirty rotter well then I'm going to call his mom one too, and probably something on top of that just to let him know that you know, I'm not going to let... I'm not going to take that and let him get away with that.*

What is communicated or 'meant' by the behavior, its meaning, becomes clear in the eyes of this player, within the context of the game. By giving him 'something on top of that' he is letting the other player know that he isn't going to passively accept the cheap shots, and that he isn't afraid of him, and that he doesn't respect him. Indeed he is even going to give back more than he received, to punish the opponent more than he has been punished.

To refer back to our car slide example, the 'slide' now gets bigger if the first player maintains these same values, has the same lack of respect for the opposing player, and perceives that he must retaliate against an uncalled for provocation. He too will retaliate, for he has been provoked and perceives himself the victim of a cheap shot. His retaliation will also be 'just a little bit more' than he has received, and the intention and meaning will be similar: to communicate that he isn't going to take it, that he isn't afraid, and that he doesn't respect the other player.

The value attached to always wanting to get the last shot in and always wanting to end up on top contributes to these escalations. Ironically, this attitude is the opposite of what would logically produce the desired results. Most hockey players don't want to fight and don't enjoy fighting, yet this response unwittingly moves them closer to the possibility of one occurring. In our car slide example, it is the opposite of the natural or instinctive (i.e., first) reaction that will be most effective in stopping the slide. With a car the first

reaction is usually to turn against the slide, but this has the unfortunate consequence of causing the car to overcompensate, and the slide gets worse. The unnatural, learned response is to turn into the slide, and this results in the car eventually coming out of it as each subsequent slide gets smaller. In hockey one's first reaction is to retaliate, to try to get the other player back a little bit more. This usually results in escalating incidents and often a fight. The learned response, involving controlling these automatic reactions, is a very difficult habit to develop. Only a few players are capable of 'playing their own game' and making decisions on how to respond independent of the socially prescribed response. Yet if this were done escalating incidents would be rarer and fights would be reduced.

To understand why this process escalates into a fight we can draw on another element from the car sliding example. Ice is a slippery surface where slides are more likely. When playing hockey, players are more emotionally excited than usual. Their reactions to cheap shots are altered by the intensity and arousal from the game. They have a greater tendency to retaliate than if they weren't playing hockey.

When a car begins to slide, it becomes even more unstable and likely to continue sliding. Similarly for hockey players. The emotional excitement and intensity of the game is high. When provoking incidents happen, these lead to an even greater emotional arousal, and further contribute to the instability of the game. On road ice, a loss of control is the result, and the car may spin out and hit the ditch. On hockey ice, the intensity may contribute to a loss of control, and a player may 'tick-out' and hit another player.

In the hockey environment, fighting is the choice most often made by players who get into this situation. In an arousing situation, people respond with their most learned response. In the context of hockey this involves retaliating. Backing down is such a negatively perceived behavior it was rarely even mentioned as a possible option by the hockey players interviewed. To change behavior in mid-stride during an escalating incident takes extreme control and discipline. One player described this escalation as follows:

> *It was just one of those things where you feel yourself going, and its not a conscious move to stop or start. Once you're in that, or at least once I'm in that set I just keep going. You don't really think twice until the things over... I threw him down, and right after then it was whatever happened happened. If we had of been broken up, that would have been fine, but it was... everything was just kind of flowing right then....*

This player was involved in an incident that escalated into a fight. His goalie got 'stuck', so he went to the opponent to retaliate and show to him that he wasn't going to let him get away with it. This led to a confrontation involving pushing and shoving and he eventually threw the other player on the ground and fell on top of him. When the other player got up, they squared off and fought. Once this player initiated this interaction, he never stopped to think or reflect upon his behavior. A fight was an inevitable result of such behavior, given the norms and context of hockey, and both players' dispositions to 'not back down'.

The time frame during which an escalating incident occurs can vary. Some players may remember cheap shots for long periods of time, and might not retaliate for several minutes, or even until the next period or game. Others might retaliate immediately, thus giving the appearance that the escalation has been instantaneous, or that it hasn't really occurred. This second type of player has been discussed previously in terms of the person who sets his limits to what he'll passively accept very low.

Another reason that escalations may appear to be instantaneous is that players may have gone through this escalation phase in previous situations. The player who holds a grudge is an example of this. He may bring to the game negative thoughts from the previous game, or from previous provocations. These thoughts may increase his arousal, even if it isn't directly observable in his behavior. Thus fights may appear to start instantaneously, but the escalation process has usually taken place, even if only through the player's thoughts, and/or before the game began.

Most players in this situation would like the opponent to back down. This relieves them of the tension and unpleasantness of being put on the spot. When a player is challenged he is 'put on the spot' and forced to prove himself. He must act in to portray his tough image, or suffer the possibility of being negatively labelled. Players can't afford to back down or show any fear or weaknesses. To do so would give the other person the edge. Players are afraid not to accept these challenges, and also afraid of failing at them. These fears increase their intensity, as does the anger they feel during these interactions. Tension resulting from the evaluations of others also leads to this arousal.

> *I've had it like that in other games, me and guys have had rows and you can sort of feel it. I remember my third year I guess....Me and __ ___ were kind of eyeing each other up all game. Because he was a centerman and I was a*

centerman there was always confrontations at the face-off draw, and it was a tough game, and there was verbal talk all throughout the game and stuff like that.

This tension creates an atmosphere or a rapport between players. Both players feel this, and realize the cause lies in the mutual dislike they have for each other. This rapport involves an awareness of the possibility of a fight. A player who dislikes an opposing team member, and who is interacting with him, will be very aware that he might have to fight him. One's team-mates are also aware that these bad feelings exist.

Playing back with Messier and that, you could tell they were going to fight a certain individual before the end of the night, you just didn't know when. And they knew it, and probably the guy that they fought knew it.

The bad feeling between two players manifests itself in the outward behavior that occurs between them. They begin to look for opportunities to 'stick' each other or to cheap shot each other. Their cheap shots become more deliberate, and often more severe . Players often hit anyone, out of frustration, but this frustration now turns to anger and is directed at a specific player. They now try to 'get someone' because they don't like him, and because they feel anger toward him.

E. The Confrontation

There comes a time when you've got to stick up for yourself...you know, its just like backing a dog into a wall, eventually you've got to fight.

Confrontations are characterized by two players coming face to face in a tense interaction process. They try to determine what the other's intentions are, and what their own intentions should be. During this stage players are faced with the unpleasant task of deciding whether to fight or not. The process of facing each other and realizing a fight could occur, and deciding whether to fight or not, has been labelled a confrontation. This label is used to describe a style of play that is often present in hockey games, although there are a diverse variety of behaviors that could constitute a confrontation.

A confrontation usually develops from a period of escalation, during which cheap shots and retaliations were exchanged. They often involve some pushing and shoving back and forth by the players. It is during this face to face encounter that a fight usually develops, although these confrontations may be broken up several times by the referees and/or other players first. Escalating incidents may arise at any time during the game, and

confrontations are likely to occur at any time in the game as well. For example, they may occur during the play, after the whistle, or even before the puck is dropped.

During a confrontation, the provocations and retaliations that previously occurred within the context of the game gradually take on a new context. This context shifts due to the altered intentions of the players. The players begin to be more deliberate, and begin to seek opportunities to 'get' their opponent. Their provocations become much more direct and obvious, and are increasingly less connected to the game, and therefore the game context. Players are no longer trying to hinder each other's play, or instill fear and a timid demeanor in their opponents. They are trying to deliberately hurt each other. This altered intentionality of deliberateness creates a new context that is known by players, and they begin to evaluate each other's behavior within this new context. This context is the context of a confrontation. Within this new context, accidental cheap shots are rare, because players now believe that these provocations are deliberate. This is because as the game context receeds, so too does the meaning of accidental or unintentional cheap shots that often occur within the game, even though the overt behavior has not changed.

During a confrontation, both players come to realize that the other player isn't going to back down from them, or at least that this is extremely unlikely. They also realize that these confrontations usually result in fights. Yet neither of the players may really want to fight. One might simply have been trying to warn the other 'not to do it again'; while his opponent might have been trying to show that he wasn't going to 'back down' from anybody. Most players know that fights are unpleasant. There is the constant possibility of getting hurt or humiliated or labelled negatively as a result of one's performance in a fight. They usually get penalized, and therefore don't get to play as much. For these reasons, most players do not like to fight in hockey. Players are fearful during confrontations of both the possibility of a fight, and the possibility of pain or humiliation should a fight occur.

> *I can't explain the feelings you've got. A lot of its scared, you know, like your scared. Its like anything else, you know your going to get hurt. Its a tough thing to face, that you know when you drop your gloves that your not going to come out of it without a scratch. I mean there's some guys that can come out of it without a scratch, but I hardly ever do. So your scared...*

Players are extremely aroused during confrontations, much more so than during the games, or even during the escalation process. A variety of factors influence this, i.e.,

the fact that they are being evaluated by others, the cheap shots they've recently received, their anger and frustration, and the fear of a possible fight. The most important reason they are so aroused is that the expectancy or possiblity of a fight is at its greatest during confrontations. Players are ready to fight at a moment's notice. They are as close as they can come to a fight without being in one.

Another reason for the arousal comes from the unexpected nature of confrontations. Confrontations often occur quickly and unexpectedly. A player may be 'going at it' with someone in the corners or in front of the net, and things may be escalating, and the next thing he knows the play has stopped and they are pushing and shoving, yelling and swearing at each other. He might not be expecting it or as prepared for it as he might be if he had a few seconds to size the opponent up, i.e., to evaluate how he might fight him.

"The Look" is an experience that occurs in all aspects of the game, but is most prevalent during confrontations. The look involves eye contact, and includes both sending and receiving messages through this non-verbal medium. Players try to assess the intentions of their opponent, i.e., to try to determine if he wants to fight, if he's going to back down, or if he's just trying to 'stand up' for himself. They are also sending their own messages to the opponent, i.e., that they are not afraid, that they aren't going to back down, and/or that they don't like the other player and what he did. One player described how this would differ from looking someone in the eyes outside of the hockey world and noted: *"Like there'd be a lot more intensity, you know, there'd be a lot more tension in the air between us"*. This tension comes from the bad feelings that exist between the players, as well as the messages that are communicated through this look. Another player described this intensity more graphically:

> *... Did you see Rocky III, "The Eye of the Tiger?", you can see it in the guy's eyes if he wants to go or not... If you turn around and look at him, and he's you know, looking back at you, you can almost sense an aura of himself that... whether or not he's mad or he's... "Oh well, just don't do that, you know, and we can skate away and have a face-off," or "Don't ever do that again or I'm, or your going to get a lot more than that," or "Hey buddy, you just did that, your going to take more, lets go right now," or...*

Subtle messages are communicated by the looks players give each other throughout the game. Players try to portray a certain image on the ice, and often use the look to help them do so. One way they try to portray their image as a tough hockey player

involves 'staring a guy down', which implies meeting the eyes of the opponent and not looking away until after he does. As one player notes, this is an important aspect of the game.

> *A lot of times its just psychological I think. We emphasize it here, its just a mini-battle, if we... if you hit a guy and stare at him in the corner, and you stare him down sort of thing, and just skate away, its just little battles like that. If a guy is gonna bring his eyes down first then you've won something. You just stare right through him. Obviously he didn't want to...*

For this player and for many others, looking away when someone is staring at them is a way of backing down. When one's opponent turns away players interpret this as a form of backing down, and speak of winning a psychological battle. They feel they have proven their superiority over the opponent. They have portrayed an image of being someone who is not afraid and will not back down from others.

One player described a team-mate who was known for being a 'stick-man', but who was also respected (when most 'stick-men' are not) because he wouldn't back down from anybody. He made sure that his behavior was consistent with the image he was trying to portray.

> *...Well as far as being a stickman, and taking cheap shots, and that, but he does have the respect because he won't back down from anybody. He'll , he'll, in fact he does it the best of anybody that I've seen. He'll go two inches away from the guy's face and stare him down type of thing, you know, poke his face right in close.*

This player was one of the smallest in the league, but he earned the respect of his opponents by his behavior. By continuing to stare at his opponent, he showed that he wasn't afraid. He showed that he wouldn't back down from anyone. If he had looked away this could have been interpreted as a type of backing down. To prevent this label, he did not look away.

Looks are often seen as provocations or challenges by the opposing players. When players are stared at, they often interpret this as a signal of a desire to fight.

> *If you go into the corner with a guy, and you make contact, you hit, and he hits you back, but if you look away and you go back to the play nothing happens. But I know, especially in junior, ... Like in this league, where you only get one fight, a lot of guys will... this doesn't really apply. But I know in junior that if we went in the corner, if you went in the corner with a guy and you both met eyes, all of a sudden that was the challenge. If you looked away you were backing down.*

The above comment sheds more light on the type of player who 'plays his own game'

discussed earlier. As noted, this player did not 'look back', both to avoid challenging someone unintentionally, and to avoid getting challenged by someone else. Those who don't want to challenge others, and those who don't want to be challenged, will try not to look at other players. They do this by 'not looking back' or by 'putting their head down' so that they will be less likely to meet eyes with an opponent and risk this.

Players are cautious about who they chose to stare down. They don't give out dirty looks to everybody and anybody they may be angry at. One player commented on the risk involved in such behavior.

> *Well, your taking a chance, because a lot of guys will take that as an, "Allright, you want to go?", like, "You want to go?", drop their gloves and... So when you do that I guess you have, there's an element of: you have to be ready to go at any time. I know when I've done that, you get this kind of, again you get pumping, you have to get pumped up to do something like that, cause you don't know, it could be a real tough guy that your staring down. So you have to be ready to answer the call if he doesn't like that. So I guess inside you, your stomach is turning a bit, at least mine does.*

There are times when one's attempt to stare someone down is ineffectual, when it doesn't make the other person back down or intimidated. This occurs when one player tries to stare his opponent down, but the anger and desire to hurt him or to get into a fight with him is lacking. Players often stare at their opponent, but if this desire is lacking, so too will be their ability and intentions to 'stare him down'. Staring players down or giving them the eye, is only effective when sustained by these types of feelings. In fact, it is these feelings that are communicated when one looks another player in the eyes. The meaning of the look lies in the thoughts behind it. Players were not consciously aware of how they looked, i.e., the expressions on their faces when they were staring others down. Instead they were aware of the thoughts that were going through their minds. They may grimace, grit their teeth, or scowl at their opponents, but this happens without them being aware that they are doing these things. They are aware of their anger or desire to get the other player, and these feelings are what transforms their face when giving 'the look'. The look surfaces on one's face through involuntary processes. It is these looks that are read and interpreted by opponents. The player's intentions are thus communicated, even if he is not aware of this.

When both players are trying to stare each other down fights often erupt. Players don't want to look away because this is a form of backing down. As a result the only

recourse is to 'stare the guy down.' The reason this so often leads to fights is that this is seen as a challenge. During a confrontation, a 'look' has a much greater affect than if it occurs within the game context, because of the altered context of confrontations. Potentially aggressive acts are more likely to be interpreted as aggressive. Players are more inclined to assume that the opponent wants to start a fight. A comment will elaborate on this;

> *Well if you look and all of a sudden you start getting closer, you know, the guy just starts... comes in on you, cause your standing there and if you look at a guy, and all of a sudden he starts coming closer then you know, like he's thinking the same thing you are.*

During confrontations a player's attention is focussed on trying to decide what to do and on trying to decide what the other person is going to do. Players want to resolve the confrontation, because they feel 'put on the spot' during it. When 'put on the spot' players feel uncomfortable. They are aware that people are evaluating what they do. The play is often stopped, with the focus of attention on them. This attention is felt by the players as a pressure to do something. They want to do something to remove the uncomfortable feeling of this pressure. One player described this feeling of being 'put on the spot'.

> *I guess in a sense its an uncomfortable position. I don't think its a position anyone likes to be put in. I suppose its like an embarrassing moment, outside of, in life, in the real world. Your in the middle of class or something and you've been pointed out, out of the group. Your on the edge...It just happens, your on the spot. You make a decision and away you go.*

When a confrontation occurs there are usually only two options: either to fight or to back down. The dilemma players must resolve is which option to chose when neither is attractive. Backing down is not, because of the negative labelling that results. Fighting is not, because of the possible pain and/or embarrassment that may occur. Players must chose what to them is the lessor of these two unpleasant choices. Because there are only two choices, and because the social norms so potently prescribe 'standing up for oneself', which often leads to fighting, players are limited in their ability to chose not to fight.

For example, players will often try to back down without making it look obvious. This is difficult. Verbal abuse directed towards an opposing player is one way players escape being negatively labelled for backing down. Or, they may try to put on a 'brave

front' by using the situational factors in the game as reasons not to fight. For example they will say they won't fight because they don't want to get penalties, or because they don't want to jeopardize the team. They may also use 'discipline' as their reason for not fighting.

Talk however, is not highly respected in hockey. 'Actions speak louder than words' is a true saying within this context.

> *Well, some guys aren't fighters like that. Like they'll stand there and yap at each other and nothing will happen. Some guys just like to just yap at guys, call them everything under the sun, and just think that they stood up to them that way.*

Talk is cheap. Actions however, are what gains and maintains respect on the ice. Often verbal 'yapping' will incite an opponent to want to start a fight. For this reason, players who try to talk their way out of fights must be careful. They are not respected because they are not willing to 'stand up'. Backing down is the decision most favoured by the players, but it is also the decision least prescribed by the context of hockey.

The decision to fight is the one most strongly condoned by the hockey context. This decision is usually made in advance of the actual behavior. In the previous sections, the interpretations of behavior (i.e., decisions), and the responses (i.e., decisions), that are required to bring about a confrontation have been discussed. These decisions act to direct one on a certain path and toward a certain course of action. The course of action that, if not altered, at some future time will result in a fight has been described in detail. These decisions are strongly influenced by the social context of hockey. These decisions occur in advance of the actual fight itself, and are in a sense decisions to fight, because a fight is usually the inevitable end result of such behavior. When the time comes to decide to fight, the player finds that his decision is already made for him by these previous decisions. Then, during a confrontation, the decision to fight is lived through as if it was occurring 'instinctively' or 'automatically'. The players report not being aware of this decision. In reality all of the previous choices made by the players have lead to this decision. Players usually are not consciously aware of these previous decisions, nor are they consciously aware of the end result of these decisions.

For example, one player described very lucidly his slight awareness that he could decide not to fight, but a far greater awareness of the social norm that prescribed that 'you have to fight'. His comment suggests that it is not the player who is making the

decision to fight, but rather the 'role'. When players conform in this way, they aren't really in control of their decisions.

> *I guess I'm saying in a game you've got to accept the challenge. I'm saying that you don't have time to make a decision. A lot of times its just a, a thing you do. You have a chance to make a decision, but the nature of the game and the nature of your role is that you don't make a decision, you just go.*

One's 'role' makes the decision when a player is very aware of the expectations associated with a particular role. These expectations include, as noted, norms about how to respond in specific situations. When these expectations dominate the player's awareness to the extent that he is unaware of any other options, i.e., when he feels that to fight is the only decision he can make, these roles have made the decision, not the player. Players feel the peer pressure created by their role and the expectations others have that they perform according to this role as an awareness of these expectations. One player described the unstated expectations he would feel towards his team-mates that would be felt by them as a pressure to fight.

> *So if I was challenged I would go, because even though I may not want to go, or the guy may be bigger or smaller, I would go just for the fact that, you know, you kind of feel pressured. Like if I saw a guy get challenged on our team and he didn't go, especially if you knew that our guy was kind of a strong guy and stuff, you'd kind of feel like, "Geez, why didn't you go with him, why not?" you know...*

Because players are aware of and expect others to conform to the norms which prescribe standing up to challenges and fighting if necessary, they feel these norms as a pressure they must also conform to.

> *...like we sparred, kind of sparred with the gloves on, and he kept looking at me, so I knew, you know, that's when you make a decision, you say, "Hey, this guy, he's not going to back away", so...*

An essential part of these decisions involves trying to assess the intentions of one's opponent, because players determine their response by what they think the opponent is going to do. The above player commented that 'he knew' and implied that he knew a fight was going to happen. He knew this because he felt he knew the opponent wanted to get into a fight with him. These intentions are assessed using the norms of the game and via a process of categorization of behavior. Players interpret the behavior of others based on an initial observation which is then interpreted via the norms that exist to define such behavior, rather than continuing to observe the opponent until his intentions

are made clear from his behavior. This categorization of behavior is similar to that which was discussed previously with respect to labels.

During a confrontation, this means players assume that since the opponent isn't backing down or looking away, he wants to fight. But previously the inaccuracies associated with this categorization process were discussed. For example, players may be doing these things to portray an image of themselves that involves 'not backing down' (when in reality neither one wants to fight).

Another factor that contributes to the inaccurate assessment of intentions is the time frame during which these confrontations occur. Players do not usually have the time necessary to assess the opponent's intentions accurately.

> *...you just, you don't sit there and uh, grab a chair in the middle of the ice and sit down with a fellow like we are now and just go, "Ok, well, you hit me in the shoulder, and I gave you a shot back in the chin with my stick, and you got a big cut there, what are you going to do about it?", or something like that. Usually the guy, it just, kind of in the heat of the moment usually, it just, one-two, ok, gloves are off and your throwing...*

The absurdity of this player's reconstructed situation is obvious. Fights don't 'break out' this way. There would be no breaking, no disrupting of the normal fabric of reality if this were how they occurred. Fights don't start in this manner, nor are they conducted in the civil manner suggested in this hypothetical situation. As one player commented, *"Rules, what rules? There are no rules."*

Fights occur without a lot of conscious thought and deliberation involved because there is a minimal amount of time available to assess the opponent's intentions.

> *...plus not all the time you can exactly read, you know, you just got to take, that's where you got to, that split decision, you got to look at him and decide, "Ok, were going to fight right now, here we go," or...*

The difficulty involved in assessing the intentions of the opponent are clearly illustrated here. Players do not have available to them a lot of time to spend deciding whether to fight or not. The above comment on the 'lawn chair decision' suggests that fights don't happen this way. But why not? Why don't players spend more time making this all important decision? They would certainly be more accurate if they did. When considering the fact that most players don't like to fight, this would seem the logical thing to do. They don't, because of the existence of several attitudes that prevail in hockey.

For example, there is an attitude of 'be first' that has been spoken of by players. This involves the widely accepted notion that the player who gets the first good punch in is going to win the fight. Because of this, players feel they have little time to assess the intentions of their opponent and decide whether to fight or not. Although players realize this norm does not hold for all cases, they recognize it as an accurate predictor of the outcome of most fights. In order to 'be first' players can not afford to take too long trying to determine whether their opponent wants to fight. They feel they've got to get the first punch in.

> *That's what I mean, that's why you got to get the jump right away, you can't sit there and look at him, "Oh, no, he doesn't want to fight me," and then boom, bang, your just throwing off your gloves and you've already been punched twice, and...*

There is usually very little warning when someone starts punching. Players are aware of this lack of warning, and it makes them want to 'be ready'. Being ready is an attitude closely associated with being first. It prescribes that players must constantly be wary of and on guard for potential fights. Previously the fact that players can't be always looking for fights because it detracts from their game was discussed. This is true. Players maintain this vigilence 'in the back of their mind' and it surfaces during situations like confrontations where fights are likely to occur.

The reason players want to 'be ready' is that it takes a few seconds to get into a fight. When players fight but aren't 'ready' for it, they often don't get the first punch in, and they usually don't do as well. Players speak of the decision to fight as a switch, a switch from the game and into the fight. As noted, this switch involves a change of one's intentions, from playing hockey to engaging in a fight. It also involves an increase in the player's physiological arousal. This 'switch' often takes some time to occur. If players aren't 'ready' for a fight, they'll take longer to 'switch over'. During this brief period a player may get the jump on someone. He might get the first punch in, and then before his opponent can switch over he might land several more punches. His opponent will be at a severe disadvantage. Because of this, players will try to 'be first' whenever they think a fight is going to occur.

The experience of being 'on the edge' and 'ready' to fight is reminiscent of a type of individual discussed previously, who was described as intense and mad throughout the

whole game. This player got frustrated and angry and maintained these feelings during the game. He played in a very excited and intense state all the time. In describing such a player, one player commented:

> *...he's built, and he's big, and he's strong, and he gets in there quick, and he always, doesn't have to think about it, and he's usually mad, gets madder quicker than the other guy.*

The reason this player 'didn't have to think about it' was because these thoughts were 'on his mind' already. Because he was mad and angry throughout the game, thoughts of fighting and taking his anger out on his opponents were a larger part of his consciousness. The second comment suggests he 'gets madder quicker' than the other guy. The reason he gets madder quicker is because he plays closer to that state throughout the whole game. Thus when a confrontation occurs, 'the switch' takes place very quickly, because he's already playing at such an aroused state, and because these intentions are already in the forefront—as opposed to the back—of his mind. For players such as this one, and those who are aroused due to the escalation and confrontation of provoking events, switching over to a fight happens quickly.

Both situational and individual variables affect the player's decision to fight. When these variables are not considered, or when they are inconsequential, the most important factor influencing this decision is if the two players are going to back down or not. If both are not going to back down, a fight is virtually inevitable. Another important influence on this decision is whether a player thinks the opponent wants to fight. If he thinks the opponent wants to fight, then since he can't 'back down' without getting labelled, most times he will fight.

Many players reported making mistakes in assessing the intentions of their opponent. They would assume the other player wanted to fight, when he didn't really want to. The desire to be first can lead to a biased perception of intent, in that players may not wait to accurately assess the other player's actions before responding. Because of the norm to 'be first' in hockey, players will drop their gloves and start punching as soon as they think the opponent wants to fight them. It has been observed that when aroused, players perceive the behavior of their opponents differently. A second interview between myself and one subject that focussed in on how he assessed the intentions of his opponent follows to illustrate the interrelatedness of these factors. This discussion

focusses on what the player thought as he lived through this decision to fight:

1. Ok, now then you talked about in the fight ____, you said you went into the corner and you checked him, and it was a clean check, and he turned around and got up, and you said *"I might have even thrown the first punch, and we just went at it exchanging punches."* Can you give me some more detail about that, now you checked the guy in the corner, this is that same fight, and then he fell down?

   I think we both fell down, and when we both got up we were...

2. Were you looking at each other?

   Yeah, you're looking at each other, and I think we were kind of pushing off each other trying to get, up type of thing, and so you're close enough to see the other person.

3. So you had your gloves on though?

   Yeah, oh yeah.

4. Ok, so what was that look, what were you looking ...?

   Well, you just, I guess you just know, you just knew that something was coming because you'd had a ... cause I'd had a little confrontation with him before and...

5. So you were looking at his eyes?

   Oh yeah, yeah you look at the face, and see what's ... and before actually you drop your gloves you kind of spar with your gloves on, and that's...

6. So you sort of pushed him a few times and then?

   Yeah, yeah, like you push with your gloves on and then you know, after, if he's still looking at you and doesn't turn away that you got to go. But most guys if they turn away then you just break clean.

7. So in other words, if he'd turned away after he got up, you wouldn't have thrown that punch?

   I don't think so no.

8. That's interesting, I don't understand that, can you explain that?

   Well,...

9. Like you were sort of pushing, and you were sort of looking at each other, ...?

Uh, ok, we were pushing, and I ... we'd look at each other, and... I guess that the way that I look at it is that... the way that I play it is that I'm not going looking for it, but if they're willing to come at me, and if I can determine that he's ... that he means... that he wants to fight...

10. Did you know that he wanted to fight?

Yeah, I could tell, oh yeah.

11. Even though he hadn't dropped his gloves?

Oh sure, because like I say, if I'm looking right at you, and pushing you, and I'm looking at you, then you know that I mean business, but if I push at you, and then look around at the puck or something, or look off to the side, then you've got the feeling that I'm not too interested in you.

12. So he was pushing at you too then, so it wasn't just you pushing it was two way?

Oh no, it was both, when we both came out of the corner it was both. That's how they usually start you know, pushing and shoving, both guys stare each other down for a second, just to see the intent I guess, how serious it was.

13. So in one sense you're sort of looking to show that you'ready, but you're also looking to see if he's ready? If you'd have backed away do you think he would have kept pushing you?

Oh yeah.

14. What I mean is, do you think there would have been a fight if you'd have looked away?

Uh, I think he would, yeah. The type of player he was, he would have...

15. He would have smoked you?

Yeah, regardless.

16. Ok, that's interesting. So he knew then, so even though you got the first punch in, you know it was just cause you got the drop on him, more than because you'd sort of suckered him?

Oh, I never suckered him, no. It was... like we sparred kind of sparred

with the gloves on, and he kept looking at me, so I knew, you know, that's when you make a decision, you say "hey, this guy... he's not going to back away, so".

17. You could have backed away, but...

Yeah, I could have, but I'm sure he would have just kept coming at me, you know.

18. You might not have had to fight, but he would have certainly dominated you?

Yeah!

VIII. THE FIGHT!

Having spent considerable time discussing the context wherein fights occur, and the events leading up to fights, it would be ironic to discuss only briefly the actual fights themselves. However this would accurately reflect the ratio of responses obtained in this study. The bulk of discussion focussed on these two aspects, at the expense of much dialogue on the actual experience of fighting. It was as if the players were saying that in order to understand fights one must really come to understand the events leading up to them and the social world these events take place in, and that once these two aspects were understood the rest is straightforward and requires little elaboration.

The fights themselves were often described in sparse terms, such as "He looked at me, I looked at him, and away we went again", or simply as "We went at it", or "We fought, and the referees broke it up". It was often difficult to get the players to discuss at great length the details of these fights. I frequently had to ask for more details and try to get the players to elaborate on these vague expressions, so that a greater understanding of what its like to 'get into a fight' might be realized. I was not always successful. I soon found out that there is a reason for this, and this can help illuminate what the experience of fighting is like.

A. Technique

> *...the first thing you've got to realize is whether he's swinging with his right hand or his left hand. Usually you can go by physical sense, when you get whammo in the mouth, when you think he's a right hander and the left hand smokes you...*

The technique or mechanics of fighting was one aspect that was not discussed very clearly and was seldom elaborated on. Fights in hockey have a very similar format in terms of the specific overt behavior involved. This can be observed from watching some. The mechanics of fighting are not difficult to acquire. Fighting in hockey is not the complex 'art' that boxing is often described as.

The typical format of hockey fighting involves very simple and basic moves, and there are only a few alternative moves utilized (although there could easily be more if desired). This format can be briefly yet clearly described as follows: "Each player grabs the other player's jersey with one hand, (usually the left if they throw with the right), and

punches as fast and as hard as they can with their other hand; they try to protect themselves with their own left arm and shoulder (or the arm they grab the opponent with), either by putting their arm and shoulder in the way of their opponent's punches, or by putting their head behind their shoulder, or both; they usually punch over top of their opponent's arm (which is being used to try to block their punches) and sometimes underneath, especially if they see the opponent's head is down." A few players described these mechanics in detail, while most alluded to them only briefly in the course of the interviews.

Players who were more aware of 'technique' were those who were known to get into a lot of fights, especially the enforcers who had to fight when told to by the coaches. Because of their role, these players had to be more proficient at fighting for their own and their team's success. Most players, especially those who only fought occasionally, didn't seem to be as aware of 'technique', nor did they seem aware of this lack of awareness.

There is much evidence that fights generally involve this typical format. Some of this was provided in discussions of fights that didn't follow this typical format. These stood out as being different and unusual, and players reported not knowing how to respond to these atypical situations. In a typical fight each player has certain expectations about how the opponent is going to act. They develop plans for how they will react based on these expectations. Confusion results when these expectations aren't realized because this typical format is not manifest. This confusion can result in one player gaining an advantage over another, as in the following situation:

> *...but this guy, he's so quick, and he switches hands on you so, if you're expecting it to be coming from this side, he'll throw it from the other side, like this was the first time we ever played Kitchener, I think that's one thing that really helped him. Cause this [other] guy, he didn't expect too much from him and he just... totally destroyed him.*

In this situation the player who won the fight had a unique technique that involved punching with both hands. His opponent had not fought him or seen him fight before, and didn't expect this. Thus, he did not know how to react. Because this player was so quick as well, he got the jump on the opponent, and ended up winning the fight very convincingly. In this unique example technique played an important part in determining the winner.

Despite the above example, technique is generally not a very important factor in successful fights. There are several reasons for this. These include the mechanics used in

the fight, which places no emphasis on strategy; the short duration of the fight, which makes any elaborate strategies infeasible; and the emphasis on the value of toughness. This value prescribes that it is more important that players stand in there and keep fighting, even when they are losing. Winning through technical superiority is less important than standing up for yourself. Because technique is not important other factors become more important to successful fighting. One such factor is clearly the size of the player. His physical attributes, including strength, speed, arm reach, and balance are also important. Technique in hockey fights does not consist of strategy, tactics, or skill, but rather of speed in getting the first punch in, ability to balance oneself on skates, and mental toughness to keep punching until the fight is over. In the exchange of punches that constitute a hockey fight, the contest is between the physical domains of a man's existence, and not the mental or skill domain.

Not surprisingly, players think most about the technique or mechanics of fighting before fights actually happen. This was discussed previously when it was suggested that players think about possible fights occurring, and that this thought includes the technique they might use in a fight. One player noted that before the fight he was aware of what was going to happen, but during it he wasn't aware of what was going on, and after it he wasn't aware of what he had done.

> *When I'm in a fight, I really don't know what takes place. Like I'm fighting, but when the fight is over I really don't know what I did, how I did or anything. A lot of times you get so emotionally keyed up in a fight that you don't really understand what you're doing, you don't figure it out, or you can't play by play describe what you've done.*

The players who were not known for fighting and didn't get into many fights had a very difficult time describing what happens in fights. They generally answered "I don't know, I've never really thought about it." to many of the questions focussing on this. One player who wasn't known for fighting did not even know that he was a left handed puncher until his third or fourth fight. He had not noticed this, and he wouldn't have, unless someone else had pointed it out to him.

B. Fatigue

> *Your just exhausted after a fight, like it takes a lot out of you, a lot more than people think. And you just want to sit down, and take a few breaths, and go, "Whew, like wow!"... kind of thing.*

As noted, fights last a short time. Players know that fights are over quickly. They also know there is not much time in a fight to 'get the guy' before the referees step in and break it up. Because of this, players do not conserve their strength during a fight. Instead there exists a strong consensus that in order for players to do well they must fight 'all out'. One player described this clearly:

> *Once just the physical action, you start swinging, you just go for all you're worth. There's no holding back. There's always the saying that often the guy who throws the first punch is going to win the fight. That's not necessarily true, but at least you want to be able to get that first good shot in. You don't want to be taking it you want to be, you want to give rather than receive. That's basically what you want to do, you don't want to be sitting there taking punches.*

This intensity is so high that even though fights are over very quickly, players become extremely drained and tired after them. There is a great deal of action compressed into a short time span. Many players in this study spoke of the phenomena of fatigue. Players go all out in the fight. 'No holding back' implies that all their energy is channelled into the fight. Players don't 'hold back' anything during a fight, and after a fight they've got 'nothing left'.

Some will try to pick their fights in accordance with this fact. They may try to start a fight with someone who has been on the ice for some time, while they are fresh and rested. They hope to get an advantage over the other player by trying to 'get him' while he's too tired to fight effectively. This fatigue is a similar kind of fatigue from the game, but it is more tiring and experienced to a greater degree after a fight. One player described this:

> *No, its basically the same kind of thing. You're just drained. I know one fight I was in and I think it lasted fifteen seconds or so; and but I just got on the ice, and I was just, I was drained you know, it was like the shift was over. Like you're tired. Its just complete physical output.*

Players notice the length of a fight by this fatigue. If they aren't very tired and still want to get the guy, then the fight wasn't experienced as a long one. If they are in a brawl and it takes a long time for the referees to break up the fight, the players may be very tired. In this case it is experienced as a much longer fight. In longer fights, players may

become too tired to keep throwing punches, or if they do they are very weak and ineffectual ones. At the end of these fights players are often just wrestling around and pushing and shoving and doing very little punching.

C. Intensity

Clearly, one reason players have such a difficulty recalling the details and specifics of fights is due to the intensity or arousal level that is present during most fights. Intensity was one of the most prevalent factors discussed by the players in this study. Intensity is a focal aspect of fighting and as such can be considered a thematic element as defined by van Manen (1984). Players attribute their inability to articulate their experiences better to the existence of this intensity. As this is discussed and explored, it will become apparent that it is constituted by elements of desire, concentration, hatred, and 'ticking out'.

Desire

You just wanted to hurt them so bad, because you've been beat so bad...

The intensity of a player's fighting is associated with his feelings of desire. The cheap shots and provocations that occur before the fight make players angry. This anger causes players to have a desire to 'get' the other person. When a player's anger is increased, his desire to fight the opponent is greater. When his anger and desire are greater, the intensity with which he fights is also increased.

Players report that when both players want to fight it is a 'better fight'. A better fight, or a 'good fight' means one in which there is a lot of action and intensity. These occur when both players are actively engaged in trying to 'get' the opponent. Fights often involve a ritual display as opposed to real anger and intense action. Players may not want to back down, but they don't really want to fight either. They resolve this by holding on, by fighting but not really trying to hurt the opponent. They are more interested in protecting themselves than 'getting' their opponent, and they really have no desire to fight. These types of fights involve less intensity. The players are just going through the motions of fighting, but lack the underlying desire.

In contrast, some players have to be physically restrained from fighting. Their struggles to 'get at' the opponent clearly indicate their desire. They are mad and they want

to fight, usually to retaliate for something that was done to them. When these players fight, they usually fight with a great deal of intensity. One player's comment dramatically illustrates this desire and how intense it can get.

> *I was skating in front of the net one time, and all of a sudden the goalie stick came up and hit me right in the face. Well I was knocked unconscious for a couple of seconds, and it ripped my nostril almost completely off, and like who's to say if this goalie did it on purpose? Well right then and there, I'm in a blind fury right? Like I've lost all contact, like I was, at this time I can barely remember what happened. But I lost all contact with what the sport was or whatever. All I wanted to do was kill this guy.*

Serious provocations like this one often cause players to get so mad and angry that they lose control of themselves. The context of the game, in which accidental behaviors like this occasionally occur, is gone completely from his awareness. All he knows is that he's been hit and that he wants to get the guy back. The seriousness of his intent to get the guy back is chillingly clarified in his next words: *"If I would have had a stick..."*

Most players reported experiencing this intensity and/or anger when fighting. One player noted that he didn't see how players could fight without being angry, although he noted that it appeared that they often did. Another player illustrated what fights are like when this desire is lacking in contrast to when it is present:

> *Like you've seen guys when they're fighting and that, all of a sudden they just blow up and they just want to keep getting at him. They're so mad that they'll do anything. But when you're calm, you know... I guess it was kind of, you're calm about it. And you know, you're not going to, I guess if he would have got me really mad, if he would have started hitting me harder... I didn't get hit very much, but if he would have started hitting me harder that would have really, that would have started getting me mad. But I wasn't getting hit, so how mad can you get really?*

The fight described above was one this player got into because of the situational factors. This fight occurred in a brawl, in which neither of the players really wanted to fight. They felt they 'had to really' because everyone else was. The lack of desire made for a fight that was not very intense. When a player fights even though he does not really want to, i.e., due to pressure from the environmental factors, he may not be as 'pumped up'. He may be going through the motions, but not really desirous to fight.

Intensity is not an inherent trait within individuals, but rather a result of the way they respond to their environment. Although some individuals seemed to fight with extreme intensity all the time, others reported getting into fights of varying intensity. Sometimes they fought with little desire to hurt the opponent, because they didn't really want to fight,

and other times they fought all out, because they really wanted to 'get' him.

This desire to fight can be influenced by a variety of external factors, such as the size of the opponent, his reputation for toughness, etc. For example, some players may have a strong desire to fight someone their size, but this desire may disappear when a bigger enforcer steps in to protect his teammate. The actions of the opponent can also affect the intensity a player fights with. For example, the above player notes that if he had been getting hit hard he would have been more angry. Other players also reported this. It is possible to get into a fight and not really be angry or mad at the start, but the fight itself may make a player angry. The actions of the opponent, particularly those causing pain or injury, may incite one to anger. Conversely, when two players are fighting and neither has a strong desire to fight, then neither one is likely to hit or hurt the other seriously enough to make them mad. In this case, their intensity will not be as high.

> *A lot of times you're not really mad, in a fight, it just happens. You just, the thought of fighting is so much in that given moment that it just happens, but you're not really mad at the guy, you know, it just, you're in the boards, you don't even know who it is, you hit him, and then he slashes you, and then all of a sudden you're in the fight, but you never realized it was the biggest guy on their team, or whatever, all of a sudden you're just fighting this guy, you don't know who it is. Usually, once you're involved in a fight, and you get hit or whatever, then you start getting mad, and its usually once the refs. come in and start breaking it up, then, then you want to get the guy, you're mad now, you didn't really get to hit him as hard as you wanted to, so you're even more frustrated.*

When a player isn't really mad or desirous to fight, he experiences a feeling of anxiousness about the fight. He is concerned about how he'll do in the fight, whether he'll be embarrassed and/or get hurt, etc. When a player's desire to fight is low, and he is challenged, he may hesitate to accept the challenge. This hesitation may continue throughout the fight, so that he might not be that active when fighting. He might be a spectator in his own fight, as opposed to an active participant. His fighting will be less intense.

> *I think its more of a, a fright or flight reaction to me, kind of thing, where somebody that's good at fighting would be pumped up because he wants to do it. To me its something that I don't want to do, but, and there's anxiety in it, because I have to do it, but...*

Players who are fearful will sometimes channel their fear of getting beat into a desire to protect themselves. To protect themselves in a fight requires that they try to hurt the opponent. They try to 'get him' before he gets them. Several players described

the desire to protect themselves as a strong motivation for them to fight intensely.

> *I guess, its almost like your survival thing takes over. It has a big affect on you. Its just sort of like saying, "If you don't watch out you're gonna get hurt." Not consciously, but subconsciously it does. You're not thinking about getting hurt at the time, I think its just back there somewhere.*

Although this player may not have been conscious of the fear of getting hurt during a fight, upon reflection he did recognize it and the motivational influence it provided. Fear can motivate players to try to protect themselves. The strength that fear can add to one's desire to fight is amazing. Players motivated by fear may fight with a great deal of intensity, and be very successful as a result. Although these players don't really want to fight, they do not just go through the motions. Once they realize a fight is inevitable, they become very intense fighters due to their desire not to get hurt. This can happen with players who don't have reputations for being tough fighters.

> *But I know some guys that really aren't, you know they're not really that tough or that strong, but all of a sudden they get into a fight and they become real good fighters because they're scared of getting beat. I know a lot of guys that fought that way, just out of shear fear. Because they were scared to get beat, they were good fighters, like they were just so pumped up that they didn't want to get beat that they totally annhillated the person.*

Other players often stay away from such opponents, and try not to antagonize them because of this. The above quote continues with:

> *And that's a scary thing, because a lot of times they're just punching out of fear type of thing, they just go really crazy, that's just probably like that guy I fought all the time, cause they just go crazy.*

When players are highly desirous to fight, when they really want to 'get the guy', their fighting ability is enhanced. Players report that these opponents seemed stronger, and fought with more intensity. Many subjects discussed the importance of wanting to fight, of being 'pumped up' or 'psyched' to fight. Desire was perceived as being very important to winning fights. In fact, this increased arousal or intensity level is one aspect that players have to 'switch over' to in order to 'be ready'. It involves a directing of both intention and desire towards the goal of winning the fight. Players have to switch from wanting to play the game to wanting to fight, and they have to want to fight very badly in order to do well.

> *Like if you're really mad, like you don't ever want to fight a guy that's so mad. Cause he's got more strength then, and he'll go crazy. You're more, when*

you don't want to fight, I guess you're more calm...

Players try to develop this intensity level for fights because they know it will help them win. Dave Schultz reported that this was an important aspect of the mental preparation or 'psyching up' he underwent before each game. He did not play as regularly as most other players, and when he was sent onto the ice, usually to 'go talk to someone' or to 'rough someone up', he had to be ready and 'psyched' with very little notice. He also had to do this without the help of the arousing element of the game play. His mental psyching was an instrumentally valuable aid to his success as a hockey enforcer.

Not all players refuse to fight opponents who are really mad. Players who are themselves really angry usually don't care who they fight. They don't care how tough he is, or if he's mad or not. All they want to do is get him. The more angry a player gets, the less fearful he is of his opponent, and the greater his desire to fight him.

Concentration

A lot of times you don't know what's going on. You're just fighting to win the fight and that's it.

Players reported a lack of awareness of other players, the referees, the fans, etc. during intense fights. This included a lack of awareness of the behavior of the other player, and even who it is they are fighting. The anger or arousal level of the opponent is another factor not noticed during intense fights. Players are thinking about what they want to do, which is to get the opponent, and they aren't aware of his actions. Players experience a decline in their rational or cognitive abilities when involved in an intense fight. They often aren't even aware of their own actions. Players describe this as acting out of emotion or instinct, rather than rationally figuring everything out. This is clearly related to the intensity level of the fighting.

You don't know what you're doing. You're almost running on emotion or instincts. You're not cognitively figuring out exactly what you're doing here, "Ok, next I'm gonna swing, no, nope... now drop back." You're just, its all reaction. You know he's going to swing, and you're gonna protect yourself that way. Its really, you just go all on sense, instinct. Especially I'd say emotions play an incredible part. You're completely aroused.

Fights focus a player's concentration similar to the game, but to a greater degree. During a fight a player is psyched to fight. He is thinking about the fight, on doing well in it

and on not getting hurt. All of his energy and thought is focussed on fighting. External 'distractions' fade from his consciousness. Players are completely aroused in the fight. This arousal is much higher than in the game itself, in which players must be less excited to perform effectively. One player described this:

> *When you play the game you've got to be more, you can't be on such a high arousal level that you can't perform. You have to be on a lessor of an arousal [sic] level so you know what you're doing. You can take in things, like what they are doing, whether their defencemen always have a tendency to pass the puck around the boards or whatever, you've got to be able to take things in. But in a fight, to a point...*

When psyched in a fight, players don't 'take things in' as they do in the game. They are too aroused to do this. Players get more keyed up in a fight in order to win. It was noted above that fighting involves very little strategy and skill. The main determinant of success is a player's physical prowress, i.e., his strength, toughness, speed, etc. In contrast, the game of hockey requires that both physical and mental skill be utilized. Like most sports, a smarter, less skilled player can beat a player who has more physical skills if his mental ability (i.e., to apply these skills) is greater. In hockey, players must be able to 'take things in', i.e., to 'read' the other team's moves, in order to know how to best respond to them. In fighting, the player doesn't care what his opponent does. He is only thinking about his own actions, which in a fight is the strategy most likely to result in success.

Real fights are all-out confrontations with both players trying to throw as hard and as fast as they can. They are resolved by the player who connects with the most punches in the shortest duration of time. In such a situation the player who doesn't go all out is going to be severely disadvantaged. When players are distracted by their opponent, they may not fight as intensely. The player who can focus himself and not get distracted by the punches of the opponent will usually do better in fights.

Not being aware of an opponent's actions against them is instrumentally valuable in a fight. If players were hindered and distracted by the opponent's actions they would be less able to focus on and accomplish their own intentions. They would have a tendency to be a 'spectator in their own fight'. Players don't want to be distracted, so they focus on trying to punch the opponent. When they are more intense and angry, this focussing is increased.

Hatred

You know, its just pure hate...

Players who get into fights experience them in different ways. Many reported feeling hatred and rage toward their opponent during the fight. The intensity of these feelings and the number of players in this study who reported them was surprising. This hatred may exist for a player whom they've had previous confrontations with, even before the fight begins. This they describe as a type of 'rapport' between players.

> *...like in a game you develop a certain rapport with certain players. You don't like certain players and they might not like you. When someone challenges you like that it doesn't take anything to go. "I hate your guts," its not even a matter of saying 'yes', you just turn around and smoke the guy. That's the best way to be really.*

Feeling this hatred is 'the best way to be really' because it helps players to "be first', which, as noted, is valuable in terms of successful fighting. This hatred, if it exists before the fight, influences the decision to fight. Players don't have to think when this is present. They are 'ready' and do not require any time to 'switch over'. They 'just turn around and smoke the guy'. It has been previously suggested that this rapport is a kind of decision that is made in advance. When the possibility of a fight arises, players have decided in advance how they'll respond, through these feelings that they have for the opponent.

For some, this hatred is felt only during the fight. After the fight this feeling isn't present. This is a surprising discovery, and is clearly illustrated by this comment:

> *At that particular time, I think you, its like you have a lot of hatred for this guy. Right now you just hate him, you hate him more than anything else, for that split second. That starts the fight, and you'll hate him till its over. Like I've fought guys where, we've had a really good fight, and we get up and he's on the way to the penalty box or whatever, and in the penalty box you'll look over and say, "Hey, good fight." stuff like that, "Yeah, good fight." and you get a lot of respect for each other that way, you won't bother him anymore and he won't bother you.*

This hatred is extremely intense during the fight, and many players have commented on its presence. But after the fight players may develop mutual respect for each other, which can replace the hatred.

This hatred may also exist between teams, or towards a certain player on one team by another team. For example, the 'stick men', those who according to Gibson's (1975) typology of violent roles use their sticks to cheap shot and intimidate others, are often

intensely hated by the opposing team. As well, when a big player provokes a smaller one the whole other team gets angry at him.

> *They had this guy on their team, his name's __ ____, and he used to stick guys, like he's the type of guy that would spit in your face, and then would run away type of thing. And he's the type of guy that could get the whole team going, the whole team just hated him, and wanted to see him get run,...*

The desire to injure someone else in a fight is very real, and is linked to the anger and hatred that characterizes intense fights. But players downplay this possibility, even to themselves. The few times it was openly talked about was when discussing a very severe provocation or a very bad brawl in which a player got severely hurt, and thus had a strong desire to retaliate. When players fight with this intensity, their desire to intentionally injur someone is greater than when this desire is lacking.

One reason this desire to hurt the opponent is rarely talked about is because of the negative norm which condemns such behavior in the 'real world'. This clearly influences the players' responses. For example, after a player described a fight I asked him if he had wanted to hurt his opponent when he had him lying on the ground and was punching him. His intentions were obvious, but the answer was illuminating of this norm which exists even in the hockey culture: *"Yeah, I guess that's kind of a terrible thing to say, but yeah, I did."* Another player noted that when the opponent was down he would not keep punching, although he knew that others would.

Most references to hurting an opponent involved veiled comments. Players would begin to discuss these feelings, and then change the direction of their conversation, thereby avoiding these areas. There are several examples that illustrate this:

> *All I wanted to do was kill this guy. And I didn't have a stick or anything, all I did, if I would have had a stick... I got up and I threw my glove at some guy,...*

> *I don't mean you don't know what you've done. Your just at a state of anger, your really out to,.. its hard to really say.*

The first player comments that *'...if I would have had a stick'...*, and then stops, but the connotation of retaliation has already been alluded to. He meant to say that if he had a stick he would have used it to retaliate back. The second player states that *'your really out to..'* and then stops before telling what one is really out to do in a fight. His original intended reply would have likely been '..to kill the guy', or '..to hammer him as hard as you can'.

Either of these responses would be an accurate reflection of the intentions of the players studied in this research. These intended responses were seldom forthcoming due to the perceived negative evaluations they would have elicited.

Some players get so angry and intense that their motor functions are ineffective. One player noted that when really mad he had trouble talking coherently. This occurred during confrontations, when he was trying to verbally challenge or abuse his opponent. This was experienced as *'being so wound up the words just don't come out properly'*. He would try to verbally challenge someone, but when he opened his mouth the words just got mixed up. This was clearly associated with feelings of intense anger and arousal. This was experienced often during the game, but he also experienced it in other situations where he was mad. When not angry or aroused he had no difficulty communicating effectively.

Another player reported that when he was involved in a very intense fight his hands often cramped up afterwards.

> *Yeah, you cramp up, you cramp up because you squeeze so hard, like I do anyway. Like I don't think about it, I don't even, I'm not conscious of the fact of how hard I'm squeezing my hands. You just try and make a fist and just throwing them as hard and as fast as you can.*

Because he was not aware of how hard he was squeezing them, his hands cramped up and it was not till after the fight, when he tried to open them, that he noticed this. Later this player provided an illuminating comment on this:

> *It's like you want to make, like if you had a hammer you'd smash him with a hammer. You want something hard and solid, so you just make... like you just tense up. When you get all that tension in your hands and that it does, you, it just kind of, you don't feel it. Like your grip, you don't feel how strong your grip is. Its the adrenalin. Like you've heard the example where the lady's kid is underneath the car? I think its the same thing as that type of thing. The adrenaline gets pumping so fast, that you don't feel anything, until its over.*

At times, players can become too excited to fight effectively. The relationship between emotional arousal and performance has been discussed by Alderman (1974), who describes it as an inverted "U" function. Performance increases as arousal does up to an optimal level of performance, after which performance decreases as arousal increases (p. 142). Fighting skill can deteriorate when arousal goes past a certain level. The player who couldn't talk right when he was mad has been discussed. As well, it was noted that players need to be less aroused in the game to 'take things in' and perform properly. We've noted

that fighting skills are less complex than game skills. The arousal level of the players can usually be higher in a fight without a concommitent decrease in performance. But even in a fight the arousal level can become too high for players to effectively perform. Some players described fights where players were just flailing away, and their punches were wild and out of control. This illustrates an arousal level that is too high, even for fighting. This was usually discussed in the context of someone 'ticking out'.

Ticking Out

I guess when your in a fight your kind of losing it already.

Players spoke of 'ticking out' when describing the intensity of fights. 'Ticking out' means that players have become 'psycho' and aren't really aware of what they are doing. Another term for 'ticking out' is 'losing it', which implies losing control in a fight. Players tend to lose control and get so caught up in the fight that they 'go crazy' and do things they wouldn't normally do.

For example, some players are aware of the situational factors precluding fighting, and thus they do not want to fight. They try to not get provoked into one. When they do, this is often referred to as 'losing it'. Although they are trying to play in control, sometimes they 'tick-out' and lose cognitive control over their actions. They fight, but cognitively they don't want to be fighting. There emotions have 'taken over', i.e., taken control, while their minds have lost control. One player described the affect this has on players in graphic terms:

> *Yeah, I've seen guys head-but, pull hair, gouge and stuff, and knee, but I've never seen, yeah, guys do lose control, like I think I do. I think you're just so psyched. So psyched up to do this, cause you drop your gloves and its like two animals right now. There's no civilized...*

There was a surprising amount of this type of behavior discussed by the subjects in this research. These events may seem exceptional, but their prevalence in these discussions suggests that over the course of several years of high calibre junior and/or university hockey they aren't that rare. Players described examples of gouging, pulling hair, even biting opponents during fights. This loss of control can be so extreme that players don't ever want to stop when they are in a fight.

He's the type of guy who would beat a guy up, punch him eighteen times, and when the guy covered up, he couldn't believe that the guy was covering up and he would start picking him up and start throwing him back down on the ice, saying, "Come on, let's fight!" And then when the refs. say, "Ok, you're out of the game", after doing a stunt like that, you know, he just completely was in a white fury, can't even,.. you can't even reason with the guy, he's just, wants to kill the referee, he just skates around that frustrated.

This 'type' of player was previously discussed as someone who is always mad during the game. He was described as a 'psycho', which is a term hockey players give to those who are known to 'tick-out' regularly. This type of player is feared because of the intensity and anger with which he fights. He is also feared because of his tendency to lose it, to be unpredictable, and therefore to be dangerous in a fight.

But there's always the looney toon type characters that you always got to be the most wary of, because you never know what they're going to do, or if they're going to stop, or..

These players are known to get carried away in fights, and to want to hurt the opponent. They usually don't know when to stop in a fight when they 'tick-out'. They'll keep punching when their opponent is down, and when the referees or their team-mates try to pull them off and break it up, they'll struggle to keep getting the guy. They are known for fighting dirty as well, i.e., gouging, pulling hair, scratching, etc. One player described trying to break up a team-mate in this state:

You go up there and go, "Come on, Turney, settle down, settle down. Everyone thinks your crazy. Your going nuts. Take it easy." And meanwhile he's spitting over your shoulder yelling at some guy, and eventually you get him off the ice.

This is unusual behavior even for hockey players. The player who 'ticks-out' or 'loses it' and does not stop fighting is rare. The normal occurrence after a fight is to let the referees break the fighters up and go to the penalty box. One player described an opponent who in his words 'went crazy', and wouldn't stop even when the referees came in.

...he'd fight and fight, and then when you were wrestling he'd scratch and bite, and he'd, he'd, whenever the referees were in-between; like lets say the fight was just breaking up, that's it, you know, the hands come up, as far as I'm concerned, my hands, my hands would leave his jersey, and I'd let the referees pull us apart. Like I'd make sure that they had a good hold of him, I'd make sure I was holding his hands, cause I've seen a lot of guys get suckered while they're breaking them up. But he would not let go, like he's just going crazy by now, he wants to get me so bad he can just taste it.

In fighting, there exists a normal way to fight that most players conform to. This was discussed previously in terms of the mechanics or 'technique' of hockey fights. There also exists 'norms' with respect to who the players will fight, why they will fight, and how they will get into fights. Norms influence whether they will fight dirty or not, and when or if they will stop fighting. Limits are norms that prescribe that there are things not done in fights, i.e., things that are unacceptable. For example, most subjects said they would never intentionally hit the referee. The referee was clearly seen as an innocent third party who should not be attacked in fights. The numerous comments that players should not hit the referee is evidence that this limit exists.

Fighting dirty was another type of behavior that was not condoned by the norms of hockey. Most players said they preferred to fight fair, and not gouge, bite, or kick. But there clearly are some who do this, as the above comments illustrate. Nearly all players in this research were aware of these limits, although some set them differently than others. Generally, it was the player who was labelled a 'psycho' who was observed to go past these limits. This player is likely to go past these boundaries and fight in an unacceptable manner. He has lost control of himself in terms of the normal boundaries. These boundaries no longer exist to limit or control his behavior. The 'psycho' is not aware of them, nor is he aware that his actions have gone past these limits.

This loss of control is seldom a total loss, however, even for a 'psycho'. As noted above, the referees are rarely abused physically, even by someone who has lost it. When behavior occurs which is not acceptable according to the informal norms, it is usually accidental rather than intentional. Kicking is one behavior considered against the formal and informal rules of fighting in hockey. One player commented on this:

> *No, no, I didn't kick him. That's pretty ruthless, well, you do a lot of ruthless things, but to take your, to take something that can slice the guy's neck in half, if I would have kicked him, I could possibly break eight ribs you know, that's, and he was down...*

His comment suggests that potentially kicking the opponent is so serious that even in the heat of the moment the limits prohibiting this won't be forgotten. Another player said that although he did 'lose it' frequently, there was always a knowledge 'in the back of his mind' that he was trying to hurt his opponent, but not to maim him. This knowledge, though not something he was always conscious of, did deter and constrain his behavior and keep him

from completely losing control. As one player put it: *"You want to fight, but you're not on the ice to kill anybody."* If they were on the ice to kill each other, these informal limits that constrain behavior would be set differently. In such a situation it is quite likely that serious injuries would be much more common.

Further evidence that players don't totally lose control is that players are always aware of who is on their team vs. who is on the opposition's team. Players seem to lose it, yet they almost never start fights with players on their own team.

> *That's one thing, you know, you always know who is on your team, you can always see a color or see a... remember a face, so...*

This player then commented on this in the context of trying to grab a team-mate who has ticked out:

> *If you grab him, he's not necessarily going to do what your going to say, but he's not going to punch you.*

Throughout the fighting experience, limits are ignored. When players are provoked they get angry and aroused. If they receive enough provocations they might retaliate. When they retaliate they are going past limits, i.e., the formal limits that define illegal behavior in the game. If they start a fight they are again going past these formal limits. Finally, when they are in the fight itself they may again go past certain limits, i.e., when they punch someone who is down, or when they gouge someone, pull hair, bite, etc.

In situations where players go past these limits they are excited and aroused. These limits fade from their awareness as they focus on 'getting' the other person. Whether specific limits are ignored or not is largely dependent on the excitement or arousal level of the individual. When they are more desirous to fight they are more likely to provoke others, retaliate, start fights and tick-out. When aroused these socially defined limits lose importance for the players.

D. Attention/Awareness

> *You feel yourself going... You don't really think twice until the thing's over.*

Players initially reported not being aware of a lot of the details of the experience of fighting, but on reflection they were able to discuss this event. During the lived experience of fighting these details don't impact upon the player's consciousness to a

degree that he is able to recall them clearly. It was from snatches and glimpses of recalled lived moments that they were recalled. In order to do this the players had to try hard to remember them. When players did discuss aspects of the fights that they couldn't recall, these things were inferred from their awareness of events and circumstances immediately after the fight, when they 'came back' and became conscious again of their behavior.

For example, it has been noted already that players don't notice their cramped hands during the fight. They report not being aware of how hard they are squeezing their hands or even that their hands are cramping up. It is not until after the fight, when the person's hands won't come unclenched, that he notices this. Many reported a lack of awareness of the referees. Infrequently a player will accidentally punch a linesman or a referee. This usually occurs when the referee gets in the way but is not noticed. Referees aren't noticed because they have no affect on the intentions of the fighters. When a referee does get hit the player is then made aware of their presence, usually in a negative way, i.e., by getting a penalty.

In one brawl a player reported not being aware of what anybody else on his team was doing, whether they were winning or losing etc., until the person he was fighting was beaten and he had a few seconds to look around.

> *And the things that you remember just in bits and pieces while the fighting's going on, taking a mental note of who's doing ok, who's not doing ok, where, who needs help and who doesn't need help. I think anytime that its a kind of brawl type situation that you're always doing that, kind of looking out for yourself, so long as you're doing ok, ..If you're getting beat it doesn't matter how everybody else is doing, cause you're getting kicked.*

Others have noted that when they are getting beat in a fight they can't remember as much as when they are winning. In this situation the fights are often one-sided, with only one player throwing punches. The opponent is dazed, and/or just trying to hold on and protect himself. He wants to get out of the way of the punches and make them stop. The way do this is to punch back. The player on the defensive is concentrating on two tasks, that of trying to protect himself from further punches, while still trying to punch the opponent. This puts him at a disadvantage in comparison with his opponent, who is only concentrating on punching him, and is not as concerned with protecting himself.

Players on the defensive are not as aware of their surroundings because they are concentrating on these two tasks. Their attention is not as focussed. Because they are not

in control of the situation, they don't always know what to expect. They experience confusion and fear as a result. They are often stunned, and unable to see or block the opponent's punches. One player described this confusing situation where he did not know what his opponent was doing. He was not 'first' to start punching, and thus was on the defensive. As well, his opponent had a unique fighting style, which caused more confusion. He was confused about how to act, and fearful of the unknown element, in this case the opponent's punches.

> *But then I remember being ducked, and ducked, and trying to hang on, and blocking punches from sort of my left side, and covering sort of to the right, and sort of backing off my right shoulder, and finally I got my right hand going. I don't know if he is a very good fighter or not, and I wasn't really sure if he knew what he was doing.*

This player's first and foremost concern was protecting himself. This involved ducking his head, which hindered his vision. He only saw one punch-he was ducking from the rest and never saw them. He remembers them only because he was ducking away from them. Their number, speed, whether and where they landed, etc., were not experienced or recalled. He only experienced his own intentions, which involved trying to get out of the way of these punches until he could 'get his right hand going'. The actions of the opponent (his punches) were inferred from the player's own response (ducking). Only the first punch was consciously perceived during this experience.

Previously it was noted that some players aren't aware of who they are fighting. As well, some aren't aware of the subjective 'personness' of the opposition. During intense fights, some players perceive the player they are fighting as an object rather than as a subject. One comment makes this strikingly clear:

> *I don't even remember seeing his face, I just remember seeing this thing in front of me, really, and I just was throwing as many punches with my right hand as I could.*

He goes on to note that although the person he was fighting was a 'stickman' that everyone hated, he wasn't aware of this player's role, or of these feelings during the fight. Instead he was just 'doing what you do in a fight'. Later he again describes what this involves, namely:

> *...your just sitting there and your just holding this thing there in front of you and you know he's going to be swinging at you and your swinging at him.*

This does not apply so much when the desire or intensity to fight is low. Players have a reduced tendency to treat their opponents like objects. In these situations players have reported not only knowing who they were fighting, but even talking to each other during the fight.

Players are usually unaware of pain or injuries they sustain during the fight. Often a player will punch someone's helmet in a fight. This is a very painful thing to do, and often results in cut and bruised knuckles. Players occasionally get bloody noses, fat lips, black eyes, etc., from fights. In most of these situations, unless the pain or injury is extremely severe, the players are not aware of it until later.

> *When I was saying that you don't feel about getting hit and that: unless the guy does damage to you, where he, like I've been hit and cut where all you feel is something warm going down your face and that's it. You know you've been cut, but you don't know how bad, you don't really care. You don't really care at that time.*

The only awareness this player had from the injury was the blood dripping down his face. He knew he was injured, but he didn't 'care' about it. He was only interested in getting the guy, and his own injury was not important to him 'at that time'. Later, after the fight, he assessed the damage done. We've noted that this is also present with injuries that occur during the course of the game. One player described his experience of getting beat up in a fight. He received a broken nose, and several stitches in his mouth, which was badly cut due to the punches he received.

> *Like at first I saw blood on the ice, cause my nose was bleeding, and I didn't know it was from me. I knew I'd got hit pretty hard, but I didn't, my nose didn't hurt or anything. I just saw the ice, and then I was going like this* (Here he makes a motion of wiping his hand across his mouth and then looking at his hand) *and it was mine.*

This player didn't notice his injury until after the fight. He knew he had been hit, because the blows stunned him some. But their severity wasn't fully appreciated, and the pain wasn't fully experienced, until after the fight.

Pain is not experienced during the game because the player is not attending to it. It could be experienced more completely during the fight, if there was a reason for it to be. For example, although players experience pain more after the fight than during it, there is also a corresponding shift in attention to this pain after a fight. It is this broadening of one's attention that causes pain to be 'noticed'. This shift is a conscious one. One player's

typical comment is that:

> *... your so caught up in the fight, I don't, like a lot of times I don't know until I get back and then you check your hands and you say, "Oh, yeah, I did hit his helmet."*

It is the 'checking' of one's hands, and of one's face, and of one's body, that is required for pain to be noticed. This 'checking' involves a shifting of one's intentions from the fight to the parts of one's body that are painful to the player. This usually occurs when he realizes the fight is over, and he is no longer concentrating on it. As long as his mind is still on the fight or the game the pain is not likely to be noticed. In some instances it may not be noticed until the next day. In the dressing room after the game, players often 're-live' the game. They may still be 'in the game' after it is over.[23] They do not notice the pain until later on.

Most players do not notice pain because they are too busy 'noticing' the fight. As previously noted, many players reported a focussing of both attention and intention on the task of fighting. Pain is not recalled because it is not part of what the player involved in a fight focusses on. He is concentrating on throwing as hard and as fast as he can, not on the results of his opponent's blows.

For example, after throwing a punch, a player does not stop to see if he hit the opponent solidly or not. He just keeps punching. To contrast, in 'normal' social interaction there exists a self-monitoring focus. This involves attending to how others respond to one's behavior in a 'feedback loop'. People adjust their behavior in accordance with how well their image or portrayed behavior is accomplishing their intended purpose. This is determined by how others respond to them. This also occurs during the game, thus explaining why players must be able to 'take things in'. To 'take things in' involves monitoring the actions and reactions of others and responding accordingly. When players fight in hockey no such monitoring intention is present. Players are only concerned with 'getting the guy'. They aren't attending to the opponent's actions directed towards them. We've previously noted that they do this so they are not distracted and do not become a

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[23]It is interesting to note that this occurs most often after a win rather than a loss. After a win, players want to savour the feeling of the win, so they stay 'in the game' for a longer period of time. But after a loss players don't want to think about it, and they get out of it sooner. When they do this they experience their aches and bruises sooner. See Dryden (1983) pp. 1-3 for a description of this.

'spectator' in their own fight.

Another reason why a fighter does not experience all of the elements of fighting has to do with the intensity and quickness with which fights occur. One player's comment illustrates how one can live through this experience, and yet have trouble remembering it after.

> *Well, you know, you can visually see what your doing. I know I'm punching the guy, I know I hit him, but it just seems to happen so fast that when you stop after, and you try to break it down, its very tough. You can't sit there and break it down: "And then I did this, and then I did that". ... your not thinking what your doing.*

Fights themselves are of a very short duration, and a lot of action is compressed into a short time period. Players have to fight quickly because if they spend too much time feinting, dodging, and sparring around with each other the referees will break up the fight before it starts.

The short time frame is one cause of the high intensity level present in fights. Players who commit to fight are aware of the short duration of fights, and they fight accordingly. Thus players make comments like *'you don't think twice till its over'*, and *'there's no time to see how your doing'*. 'Thinking twice' and 'seeing how your doing' refer to this monitoring of behavior. In hockey fights, not only do players not want to monitor their behavior because it distracts them, but they do not have time to do so because fights happen so quickly. Players speak of 'natural reactions' in talking of this.

> *Uh, well, I don't think you have time to think about it, I think its just a natural reaction type of thing. If he's coming, you know if he's swinging lower than you, if he's dropping his hands, then your going to go over. So you don't really think. I think its more of a natural thing. I think you just adjust, just like anything else.*

Players don't notice what they do or how they do or the actions of their opponent because fights happen so quickly they don't have time to observe and experience all of the details of their performance. A fight is so intense that if they tried to consciously monitor and remember the results of their actions they would be overpowered by the opponent. This kind of monitoring requires time and distracts one's intentions, both of which can have detrimental consequences to the results of a fight. All players can do is step in and throw their best punches, and keep going until the referee breaks them up.

> *Not for me, because, I just want to keep swinging. I just have, like that's the*

way I want to do it. I just want to keep swinging. I don't care, you know, how many times or, I'm not looking to count.

During the fight players do adjust their behavior according to the responses of the other person, but these adjustments occur without the player consciously thinking about them. These decisions occur quickly, and there is little monitoring of them to determine if they were the correct ones or not. They are not attended to long enough to be remembered. There is constant and fast paced action and new decisions are made without any hesitation in between. The adjustments and changes that occur during the fight are lived through as if they occurred automatically. Players are only aware of them in retrospect.

Why do players chose not to monitor their performance or their opponent's reactions? The above player comments that he 'doesn't care' about this. All he wants to do is 'keep swinging', because the fight is over so quickly. Several subjects noted this. Players experience this as a concentration, a focussing of their intentions. This involves focussing on the very specific intention of throwing punches. The player doesn't 'care' about anything else. He only thinks about 'doing what he has to do'. One player graphically discussed his thoughts and intentions during an actual fight, and this dialogue is reprinted in context to illustrate this:

1. Ok,..You talk then about what went through your mind at the time of the fight, and you said *"Well, everything happened so fast but you just, to me, I just, going through my mind all the time is that just keep hitting no matter what, just keep pumping"*. I wanted to kind of get into that a little more. Are those the thoughts that are running through your mind, or is that before the fight, or what?

   Uh, I think that's true in the fight, you just keep... keep saying to yourself that you have to keep going, you know, keep going until the refs. get in there.

2. So that's what you would say to yourself?

   Yeah, inside, I would be saying "come on, keep going, keep going". A lot of times you may ... you may just hold back or not throw a full punch, but you have to... you know, you have to keep yourself pumped and keep going.

3. Hold back and not throw a full punch?

Well, uh, you maybe tend to be a spectator and receive more than you do give, and you want to make sure that your giving out just as much as your taking in.

4. Why would you tend to do that?

Uh, like he, the guy could be a superior fighter, and he could maybe get the jump on you.

5. Stun you? And that would ...

Yeah, stun you, right, yeah, and to just say "wow" and cover up, and just try to protect yourself, where its probably better just to keep going, at that stage.

6. So you would have a tendency to cover up, but you wouldn't want to?

No, you wouldn't want to.

His thoughts and intentions direct his awareness, so that he is only thinking about what he wants to do. If the other player hits him a good one and he shifts his focus of attention, he's liable to stop throwing punches, and thus end up 'being a spectator'. If he attends too much to his own actions he'll be slower, and the opponent will likely 'be first' and get the jump on him. Players do not want to be 'spectators in their own fights' so they make sure they concentrate on their intentions. They do this so they aren't distracted by their opponent's actions.

E. Winning

When you feel yourself hit him you know you've hit him, and its a good feeling, to land a good one.

Winning in a fight involves controlling the opponent. A person has won a fight when he has physically controlled the opponent. To be in control is to be able to take physical action when desired, i.e., punching him at will, pushing him around, and/or throwing him to the ground. It is to be able to dominate the opponent when desired. Being in control involves a feeling of confidence and superiority.

To lose in a fight is to be controlled by the other person. The opponent's actions physically control a player. He may know he's getting beat, but not be able to do anything about it. He can't 'work' his body right. The opponent controls him and his body at will, and can do whatever he wants. Players feel helpless when they are losing a fight.

Most fights don't involve a clear winner or loser as defined above. Often the fight is broken up or ends before this stage is reached. The players may each throw a couple of punches, fall down and wrestle around a bit, with neither one having clearly dominated the other. This loss of control for the loser or dominance by the winner is usually physical, but it may be mental as well. For example, a player may get 'stunned', and thereafter be unable to control either his thoughts or his body.

Spectators often evaluate these contests differently from the players because they see only the physical control, and do not see the mental control when it is present.

> *For the fans, its whoever is on top is the winner, but you know, and you both know, like if I hit him more times and I was on the bottom, then, you know. He's got the black eye tomorrow and I don't. We know who got the most punches in, or who got the best connections. Sometimes you can feel it.*

The best connections or most punches landed will often cause one player to be dazed or stunned, and he may then become a 'spectator in his own fight' as described above. Being dazed causes him to lose his ability to control his physical actions, if only to a degree. When this occurs the opponent is able to control him at will. This advantage is hard to regain because the player controlling him usually keeps punching him, and he thus has no time to recover. One subject described a fight where one player clearly lost after getting stunned by his opponent.

> *He couldn't see, cause he was getting hit with so many punches all he could really do is hang on. ...He couldn't, he couldn't, there was just no way, cause he was getting hit so much, you know. When you, ok, if you've ever been hit, right away you're sort of stunned for a bit, you just sort of... If you've ever been punched you know how you just sort of, it stuns you a little bit, and he was hitting him so many and so quickly that he couldn't really react to throw any.*

By 'being first' this player gained an advantage that lasted the rest of the fight. His opponent was stunned, and he continued to get punched so frequently that he never had time to recover.

As previously noted, the majority of fights don't end with a clear winner. They are usually broken up before a winner is established. In fact, winning the fight isn't the primary

goal of hockey players. Most players fight to win, but winning isn't as important to them as is the value of 'standing up' for themselves. If winning was all important, and they knew they couldn't win a fight, they would refuse to fight players they knew were tougher than them. This is not the case. In fact, players want to show the other team that they aren't going to 'take it' more than they want to win the fight. Thus they will 'show up' to fight players even if they know they are going to lose.

> *A lot of times its a matter of whether you are going to stand up to the guy or not. You're going to be fighting the toughest guy in the league, it doesn't really matter if you win or not, but if you stood there and fought him, then that says a lot, and that says a lot to the other team.*

'Standing up' to the guy is more important than winning. Because of this, players are often willing to fight tough opponents and risk losing, as the above comment illustrates. In fact, some players do not mind losing an occasional fight if, in the process, they create or maintain their tough image. One player discussed this after a fight in which he had received a severe beating:

> *No, no, I know I'd given some, guys told me after that I was getting him some good ones. But I, no lying, he got the better of me. But I still, I still, I'd do the same thing again. It didn't bother me really. I don't like having two black eyes and a broken nose, but they have to come sometime.*

This player fought an opponent who outweighed him by an estimated thirty pounds and was some two-three inches taller. He managed to 'get him some good ones', even though by his own admission he clearly lost. It was because he did manage to 'get him some good ones' that he felt satisfaction rather than humiliation from this obvious defeat. He lost, but he also 'stood in there' and showed that he wasn't a chicken.

An example from one subject's fight away from the rink illustrates that this value exists there as well. By fighting the other person once he proved to himself that he could 'handle the situation'. However this wasn't enough for the spectators present. When challenged to fight a second time by the same person he refused, because he felt he 'didn't need to prove anything'. The reaction of the spectators made him quickly realize he had made the wrong decision. At the time he felt refusing to fight was the right thing to do, but the negative evaluation from others altered his outlook.

> *I knew that he wanted to fight and I backed down from it, and I remember a friend of both of ours you know, saying, "You should, whatever you do, you should never walk away from a fight", and remembering, I'll probably*

never forget that, cause I felt really humiliated. That was probably the right thing to do, but I felt...

To be humiliated means "...to reduce to a lower position in one's own eyes or other's eyes" (Websters, 1977, p. 557). When asked why he felt humiliated, he continued with:

Well only because, people were waiting to see what was going to happen, and I was of a certain stature and a lot of people knew me, and he was of a certain stature and had done a lot of fighting... People, thought it would be a good match. Having me walk away from it, I guess people just kind of said, thought, that it was maybe a cowardly thing to do. And me feeling that.

Being 'of a certain stature' clearly refers to this player's reputation. He and his opponent were known by the people there, which suggests that they were known by their 'reputations'. The spectators expected a response in accordance with these reputations. When this response was not forthcoming, they felt he had not lived up to his 'stature' and that he had acted cowardly.

Humiliation resulted because he expected that others would 'think him a coward'. He expected to have his 'stature' lowered in their eyes. This is clarified by the comment that *...they thought it was maybe a cowardly thing to do, and me feeling that.'* Originally he thought that he had done the right thing. After he backed down he felt that others were judging him negatively. Humiliation resulted from the perceived negative evaluations of others.

Surprisingly, players usually refuse to fight opponents who are smaller than them. When asked what he would do if a smaller player challenged him, one player commented:

'Oh, you wouldn't skate away. You'd stay in there, you'd tell him why you're not going to do anything... you'd say something like that, you know, "Send someone bigger after me", or something. That's if he did it to me. Like I wouldn't challenge anyone that wasn't capable of like...

If the purpose of fighting is to beat up people, it would be logical to expect bigger players to pounce on smaller players and seize every chance to fight them. It would also be logical to expect smaller players to be more fearful of bigger players. Such is not the case. In fact-the opposite is true. Bigger players don't want to fight smaller ones, and smaller players feel less fear toward bigger players. If a bigger player lost to a smaller player, his reputation would take as much of a beating as his body. If he wins he would likely have to fight a 'policeman' from the other team whose job it is to protect the smaller players.

That's right, and just think if you lost, you'd look silly, and if you fought

him [and won] you'd look silly too, and you'd have half the other team on you too. Its a no-win situation.

The reason why fighting a smaller player is a 'no-win' situation is because whether a player wins or loses the actual fight, he'll still lose in terms of the more important element, his reputation. If he wins in such a situation he may get labelled as a bully, and have to fight 'half the other team' or an enforcer who is tougher than him. Both of these may decrease his reputation. Similarly, if he loses against a player smaller than him his reputation will be decreased by virtue of this loss. In both cases there is nothing to be gained and much to lose. Because of this, its a 'no-win situation' that most bigger players try to avoid.

Smaller players are less fearful of bigger players because they know they are unlikely to get into fights with them. This was alluded to earlier in the discussion of 'the look', when it was noted that one small player showed no fear when 'staring down' bigger players. He was able to do this because he knew the chances of having to fight them were minimal.

Further evidence of the importance of one's reputation in fighting is provided by one player who commented that he enjoyed a fight more when he did better than expected than when he won a 'one-punch' knockout. Again, if winning were the primary motivation this would not be the expected response. He notes in discussing this:

Oh, as far as the fight goes, I, I've felt a lot better after, you know after other fights, cause it was so short. It felt, sure its going to feel good when you just one punch a guy, but I, the best fights, the fights I've felt the best in is when you're fighting a big guy, and you just, you hold your own, and that's, you know, nobody expected you to.

In a fight where he did better than others expected him to, he has built up his reputation more than by winning a one-punch fight. This is true even if he were to lose against the opponent he wasn't expected to do well against. One player described how a whole team could win, even if they were to lose the actual fight(s).

But when you've got twenty guys that are always showing up and ready to fight the toughest guy. If they don't care if they're going to win or lose they're going to fight him anyway. Then you're always a winner if you fight. Its how you play the game.

'Always being a winner if you fight' is not dependent on winning the fight, but on 'always showing up' for them, no matter who they are against. This is 'how to play the game' in such a way that one's reputation will be intact, even if his face is not. Players must 'stand

up' for themselves in order to maintain their reputations, even if this means standing up to the toughest guy in the league. Players voluntarily expose themselves to possible beatings in order to develop and maintain their reputations.

This motivation to fight explains why many players still struggle to 'get the guy' after the referees have broken up the fight. Earlier this was discussed in the context of 'ticking out'. One player elaborated on this experience of ticking out. When asked if he had ever lost a fight, he responded:

> *No, not really bad, never. I'm the type of guy that,... I'll get punched, or I'll punch and then he'll punch, and then maybe he'll get a couple of extra shots in, then say we both fall down, and if I ever have the feeling that I've been hit more than once, I'm struggling to try and get the guy again. I'm not just going to sit there, skate away and be proud that I got punched eighteen times and I only hit him once, you know. That's what I mean by guys that lose it or go psycho or whatever. They're not going to stop, they're just going to keep on going, they're just going to keep on,... "Well, who does he think he is, I'm going to show him that I'm not going to take that ever again". It's... you don't want to be embarrassed.*

To embarrass means "...to distress by confusing or confounding" (Websters, 1977, p. 370). This embarrassment is very similar to the humiliation discussed earlier. Players are embarrassed in fights because their inadequacies have been made public. When they are getting beat badly they feel embarrassment more than they feel the pain from the blows they may receive. They struggle after a fight, and try to 'get the guy' even when they've lost, in order to protect their image in front of the spectators. A player fights in a way that will make himself look good, as opposed to trying to win the fight. When losing, this may involve taking even more blows to show that he has not been beaten. Struggling afterwards, when the fight is over and/or when he has lost, is another way to show to others that he is still not beaten. This shows that he hasn't really been beaten in spirit, even though he may have been beaten physically.

> *Well, you never really get hit that hard in a fight anyways, but, if you do get in a situation where you kind of feel that you're coming out on the shorter end, well you want to try, you want to try and build your end up, and make him come out on the shorter end. You never want to be the one who's ... in the people's eye's who are watching the game and your team-mates eye's and the opposition's eye's is the lessor. You always want to be the one who's thought of more. So you're just going to take it right to the limit. So what if the referees are here, I'm going to struggle and if I get on top of you you better cover your head because...*

Players are so anxious not to look bad that they try not to cover up even when they are getting beat bad. Covering up describes a style of fighting where a player tries to protect himself by placing his hands and arms over his head, and/or by falling to the ice. His intent is to get out of the way of the opponent's punches. When a player 'covers up' he no longer tries to punch the opponent, but is only concerned with protecting himself. This is similar to being a 'spectator in one's own fight' discussed earlier. Many players commented that they didn't ever want to cover up in a fight, even at the risk of continued pain and blows from the opponent. To continue to expose oneself to further punishment in the face of often overwhelming odds is not a strategically sound thing to do, particularly if the purpose is to win fights. But as the above quote clearly indicates, it is more important to 'show him' that your not afraid than it is to beat him up.

IX. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study have clearly demonstrated the value of using information derived from the internal subjective experiences of those who have lived through these experiences in order to develop a more comprehensive 'picture' of them. New and unique information has been obtained that has provided a wholistic understanding of the experience of fighting in hockey. This research has 'brought to light' that which was experientially known by the participants and those closely associated with this experience, so that they and others can now understand to a greater degree what fighting in hockey is like.

The previous literature critique suggested that new methods can provide new information not available from other methods, and can complement these methods to provide a more comprehensive 'picture' of the 'problem' studied. This review will summarize the findings of this research and then illustrate, where applicable, how this information might complement existing research. Following this some possible areas of future research will be suggested.

A. Summary

One significant finding of this research is the importance of understanding the context within which fights occur. This context is created by the formal and informal rules of hockey, which prescribe behavior for the hockey players. The informal rules take over where the formal ones stop, and in most instances were seen to be more pervasive. It was clearly seen that an understanding of this context is important to understanding the experience from the point of view of the players, because they experience fights from within this game context. This context is the game, and the factors within the game, which created an atmosphere of meanings that were different from the meanings of everyday life. This context was seen to impact upon all aspects of fighting in hockey, and these were discussed at length.

Among the significant ones were the intensity and arousal of the game, which was shown to be an integral part of the fighting experience. It was noted that as a player's arousal in the game increased, his awareness of the non-game surroundings decreased. This paralleled what happened during the events leading up to fights, and the events in the

fights themselves, where it was observed that as arousal increased a player's awareness of the context of his actions decreased. As the events leading up to fights are lived, players reported an increasingly high arousal level. When fighting, players are generally much more aroused than during the game.

The arousal level was one aspect that was different about the context of hockey from that of 'real life'. There are others, which cause players to experience hockey as being distinct from 'real life'. They act differently when playing hockey, and they are known by others in a different way because of this. They have different identities on the ice compared to off the ice because they act differently. This illustrates why a person may be very quiet and calm off the ice and become a raging 'looney tune' when aroused during the game.

Several players discussed how they attempted to manipulate the image they portrayed within the context of hockey in order to portray themselves as a certain type of player. They attempted to portray an image of toughness in order that they not become intimidated or get a reputation for being a chicken. This was an instrumentally valued image to have when playing hockey. To acquire this image players had to 'not back down' from provocations from their opponents. This often resulted in situations where players ended up fighting when neither one really wanted to, but neither wanted to back down either.

It was further observed that players would fight opponents that they knew were tougher than them in order to create and maintain their image of toughness. Fighting in hockey was an acceptable occurrence in the minds of those who create and maintain this context, even if it means losing in order to establish one's reputation. Players reported receiving positive reinforcement from peers, fans, and coaches for fighting, although many noted that they would never fight outside of the separate reality of hockey. The formal rules condemned fighting, while the informal ones not only condoned it but prescribed it. Generally the informal ones had more influence.

Players are clearly aware that fights are part of hockey. This awareness exists 'in the back of [their] minds' when playing, and may become more dominant as they attend more to this possibility, and/or as the situations in the environment move a player closer to this reality. This awareness consists of detailed images and feelings that players would experience in a real fight, so that players can get pumped up just from thinking about

fighting. When this awareness is attended to for a long enough period of time, the possibility of fighting becomes a reality. This generally occurs when both the individual and the environment interact, making fights extremely likely events.

Thinking about fights in this way was seen by many players as an important preparation for a real fight, should one occur. Players must 'switch' their attentions from the game towards the fight, and they must be more intense and aroused to fight 'all out'; both of which are important for successful fighting. This switch takes a few milli-seconds, and since 'being first' is often such a determining factor in successful fighting, players always try to 'be ready' should a fight occur. For this reason they are always aware that a fight might occur, although they can't be thinking about fighting all the time because it will distract from their game. This awareness exists 'in the back of [their] mind', and fluctuates with the game situation and their individual mood.

The norms of hockey caused players to perceive their team-mates and the opposition in a biased manner. They tended to view the behavior of team-mates as positive, and the behavior of opposing players as negative. This resulted from group membership, as opposed to any overt features of the behavior. This created conflict between opposing players that might not have been there otherwise. This conflict was manifest in a physical way.

Frustration is a fundamental part of hockey. All the subjects discussed this aspect of the game. Frustration arising from provocations was seen as being a cause of fights. Frustration arises because of the physical nature of the game, and the conflict that is inherent in hockey. This conflict is manifest in direct physical thwarting of one's actions by an opponent. Frustration occurs because players have intentions that are highly desired that often get thwarted. Many subjects reported not noticing or not minding the cheap shots of others which did not hinder them, but when they were injured or fatigued it did hinder them, and it thus frustrated them. For an event to cause frustration the player's intentions had to be highly desirous, or else he would be unlikely to become frustrated should he be thwarted.

This is one aspect that the majority of empiral research has failed to investigate, and is one likely reason why there is so much ambiguous research addressing the frustration-aggression question. The data from this study clearly indicate that in the minds

of the players, frustration is indeed a very real and a very volatile influence on fighting behavior. Empirical research has generally failed to validate the operational measures used, and thus it is not known if frustration was really an element in the experiences of the subjects of these studies.

In hockey, the formal rules were reported by many to be an influence on whether they fought or not. The different atmospheres toward fighting in junior vs. university hockey were described, and were related to the different formal rules that existed in these two leagues. In junior (versus university) hockey the formal rules aren't severe enough to prohibit players from breaking the rules. As well, it was noted that the referees allow some formal rule violation, and that this is done because the informal rules prescribe it. It is doubtful whether the referee could eliminate this formal rule violation, even if he wanted to, due to the fast pace, and the difficulty involved in watching ten players skating at high speeds all at once.

The fact that players were aware of the formal rules against fighting in hockey, and the fact that many reported being aware of and able to control themselves in situations where they knew they couldn't fight without jeopardizing the team, suggests that if the formal rules were made more severe fighting could indeed be eliminated. Players are aware of both the rewards for fighting, which include a reputation for toughness, increased freedom on the ice, etc.; and the penalties for fighting, which include possible pain and injury as well as having to sit out the resulting penalty. They fight in junior more than they do in university hockey, because the rewards outweigh the benefits. They don't fight in university hockey as much because the penalties are more severe and are beginning to outweigh the benefits. Clearly if the penalties were made more severe in both leagues fighting could be eliminated. The notion that players 'need' an outlet for their aggression is destroyed by players' admissions that they could control these aggressive tendencies when the game situation made it necessary for them to do so.

Some rule violation is accidental, occurring because of the fast pace of the game, but some is also intentional. Because the formal rules don't eliminate all of this, many players discussed taking the rules into their own hands. They attempted to 'police' their own game when the referees did not. One of the ways they did this was by provoking other players, and by fighting when necessary. Dryden (1983) and Schultz (1982) also

suggest that this self-policing of hockey is a problem which leads to increased fighting. Schultz (1982) suggests that an alteration to the refereeing system would allow for more effective enforcement of the formal rules. His suggestions include moving the two linesman to stationary positions outside the ice. They would be stationed in boxes directly adjacent to the blue and red lines, where they would call the offsides plays etc. This would free up space on the ice for the inclusion of one or two more referees. The additional referee(s) could then help enforce the more difficult to observe rule violations which often go uncalled. This strategy is employed in football, where all of the referees on the field can call penalties, and the placement of the ball is handled by linesman who stand at the edge of the field.

There is a grey area in hockey where players subjectively act and react to others based on the informal rules. Self-policing is one informally prescribed behavior that is initiated due to inadequate enforcement of the formal rules. Another is intimidation. Intimidation is a type of relationship that often develops between players as a result of one player's actions. These actions may be against the formal rules. Intimidation results from the way one player reacts to the intimidating behaviors of an opponent. Intimidation and attempts to intimidate often lead to fighting. Players are motivated to intimidate because if their opponent is intimidated they will have more 'freedom' and will gain an advantage in the game. If all illegal behavior was more thoroughly penalized due to the more effective rule enforcement system described above, it is likely that some of the intimidating behavior would be eliminated.

The above game elements are some of the highlights that have been discussed in this research. These events have an important influence on the fighting experience and the events leading up to fights. To ignore these events or to minimize them in one's analysis would cause the researcher to develop an innaccurate 'picture' of this experience.

In this study it has also been noted that there is a typical pattern of events that most fights appear to reflect. This pattern begins in the game and proceeds to move the player into the fight. This pattern can be disrupted at any time, although as one becomes closer to the fight this is harder to do. This pattern of events was described in detail and includes provocations, limits, retaliations, escalations, and confrontations. It is during the confrontation stage that players decide whether to fight or not. The context of the game

affects each of these events in a unique way, and this was described in detail in the study. These events make players more aware of the possibility of fight, which normally exists 'in the back of one's mind'.

It was observed that the player's subjective orientation also has a large affect on the experience of fighting. With regard to reaching a limit, for example, it was noted that most players set their own limits to what they'll accept from others, within the boundaries set by the informal norms. Some respond to the slightest provocation with vicious retaliations, whereas others allow themselves to be 'run out of the rink' because they are intimidated by the opposition.

How players chose to respond once they have reached a limit is determined again within the context of hockey. Three general options are available, and include standing up, backing down, or ignoring the provocation. Only the first generally leads to fighting. Ironically, this option is also most clearly and consistently prescribed within the game context.

During this typical pattern of events players experience a gradually increasing arousal level. Some players reported responding without thinking, others noted that they sometimes ended up retaliating against the toughest guy in the league, or even the wrong opponent. They describe this as an automatic reaction. This was particularly true of severe provocations, after which players were likely to respond without even caring who it was from or if it was intentional or not. When players are aroused, their awareness of the context of their actions decreases. It is this context which needs to be thought about in order to consciously decide to fight, and this context is usually the element that players are not aware of when they respond without thinking.

Provocations and retaliations often escalate within hockey because of the norms which prescribe 'always standing up' for oneself. During the escalation phase players lose awareness of the context to such a degree that they are not even aware of who initiated the interaction. They are only interested in getting the last shot in, and ending up on top. They do not want to back down, so they keep retaliating, even if they were initially the initiators.

The escalation phase may end when one player backs down, i.e., from being intimidated. If it does, a fight will usually not occur. But if neither player backs down,

eventually they must confront the fact that a fight may happen. The decision whether to fight or not usually occurs during this confrontation stage.

Because players are at such an aroused state, and because there is such a value placed on 'being first' in a fight, players often make this decision automatically. They are usually unaware of this decision in a conscious reflexive way until after the fight. The decision is not made through rational means because the player is usually too emotionally aroused at this point. Nor is it made through deliberate thought processes, because he does not have enough time to think things through at this stage. This decision is also based on an inaccurate assessment of the opponent's intentions, because the player does not have enough time for this. He must quickly categorize his opponent's behavior and assume his intentions from this quick assessment.

Throughout this stage of events, and within the game itself, was the experience of 'the look'. Players had psychological battles without even dropping their gloves by how they looked each other in the eyes. They reported being able to challenge people to fights, intimidate them, and communicate a variety of messages by how they looked at them, without saying a single word.

The fight itself is usually very intense and action packed. A fight is an 'all-out' encounter, with players not holding anything back. Players discussed this intensity element at length, it was seen as a central theme of fighting in hockey. It had an impact on many aspects of the fighting experience.

For example, during intense fights players reported not being aware of the 'humanness' of the opponent. In less intense fights they reported talking to the opponent. This contrast reflects the different 'types' of fights that are possible. Players can fight very intensely, during which they might be fighting an object as opposed to a person, and they may totally lose awareness of the context of their actions. They may bite, gouge, pull hair, and even knee or kick the opponent, not being aware of the potential injury they may be causing. In contrast, they might fight with very little desire. They might just be going through the motions, not really wanting to fight and not trying very hard to 'get' the opponent. This variance in fighting 'type' was related to the variance in a player's desire to 'get' the opponent. If he had a strong desire to fight, then he would be more intense and aroused in his fighting, whereas if this desire was lacking so too would be the intensity of

his fighting.

Intensity and arousal affects a player's awareness of the experience of fighting in hockey so that he can not recall the 'play by play' details of fights. Players reported acting and reacting out of instinct and not being able to 'break down' the actual fight into its constituent parts. This is due to the high intensity level and the short duration of fights, where a large amount of action is compacted into a very short time span.

When players fight due to a strong desire to get the opponent, they can be described as being internally motivated. Something has caused them to want to get into a fight, whether it be their own subjective state, or the actions of the opponent(s). When they fight but do not have this strong desire to fight, it is usually because they feel they have to. They might feel they have to for a variety of reasons, i.e., to avoid being labelled a chicken, or because the coach told them to, or because their team-mates expect it. Regardless of the specific reason, this desire to fight is not internally motivated, but is environmentally motivated.

Players discussed this environmental pressure at length. They 'felt' the expectations of others that they should fight as a real pressure to fight. Few seemed aware that they could refuse. They felt they had to fight, even if they did not want to. They were aware of the reality of the game, and that in this reality fights are expected. Although these expectations only exist in the players' minds, they influence and control behavior just as strongly as do more 'concrete' factors such as the physiological arousal of the players.

This pressure is not experienced as 'role pressure', but rather as a pressure to do what others expect of them. One reason why some are more influenced by these environmental factors is that they adopt to a varying degree the norms and values of the social system of hockey. Those who accept it completely will be more influenced by the forces inherent within it. Those who don't accept it (those who were described as 'having their own game') will be less controlled and influenced by this environment.

Players noted that their main purpose in fighting was usually not to beat up the opponent, but rather to establish and/or maintain a reputation or identity for themselves. Beating up someone was only one possible way to do this-others included intimidating others or fighting players who are known to be tougher to show that one isn't chicken.

Several players commented on this, and said they would be willing to take a beating if it would help them to maintain their reputation.

B. Future Directions

There are several ways that this research can be used to complement and further the existing research. For example, two rather distinct types of fighting seem to be present in hockey. As noted, at times players fight because they feel pressured to, and at other times they fight out of a strong desire to 'get' the person back. In the first type, players are fighting for an instrumental reason—to maintain their image or to maintain their place on the team—and they are motivated due to the environmental pressure. In the second type players want to hurt the opponent. They are internally motivated by a strong desire to fight. Two usually distinct kinds of fights result from these different motivations. The first leads to fights where the players are often just going through the motions, whereas the second results in more intense fights where there is a strong desire to fight.

This dualistic typology is similar to the categorization scheme that has been developed to distinguish between instrumental versus anger aggression (Buss, 1971; Feshbach, 1970). This research illuminates this scheme by suggesting that 'anger' or 'hostile' aggression is motivated by internal factors, while 'instrumental' aggression is motivated by external factors. While this categorization scheme was initially developed for aggressive behavior, it has also been noted in this study of violence in the form of fighting in hockey. A study of 'aggression' from a phenomenological perspective would further our understanding of these differences as they are manifest in aggressive behavior. It would also provide valuable information that might be useful in developing more explicit and comprehensive definitions of violence and aggression, and of the differences (if any) between these two terms / experiences.

This research also can be used to substantiate conclusions obtained from other sub-systems which have been investigated with regard to violent behavior. Toch (1969) has analyzed transcripts about violence derived from a criminal population, and there are a surprisingly large number of similarities between the results he derives and the results of this study. For example, Toch notes that in the eyes of both criminals and police who precipitated violent assaults, this violence was usually the result of a perceived uncalled

for and unappropriate provocation by one's protagonist. Violence was engaged in to eliminate this because it was believed that punishment was due, and yet would not be forthcoming through the socially sanctioned methods in society.

Toch also notes that:

> The subculture of violence thus prescribes certain rules for the exercise of violence and also equips its members with motives, attitudes, and perceptions which produce the game in which these rules apply (p. 193).

The norms of the criminal subculture Toch studied include the need to take justice into one's own hands if the formal control system does not adequately do this. The similarity between this norm and the expressed norm in hockey of 'policing' the game (because the referees do not) is obvious. Although it is not expected that all of the norms that exist in these two subcultures will overlap, it clearly would be of value to examine these subcultures and others in order to ascertain if there are some 'generic' norms that appear to be present in most or all of them.

Toch further noted that intimidation was prevalent in the criminal subculture, and he described one case where it was used by a police officer in an attempt to arrest a man. The police officer approached his suspect in a challenging way, and tried by a display of power and authority to get him to become 'timid' and to go peacefully (Toch, 1969, p. 82). Toch also described its use by criminals to test and bait their peers. Both of these are paralleled by the functional uses of intimidation as it was discussed by the players who used it in the hockey culture.

The material by Toch also provides supportive evidence for the existence of an alternative reality that some criminals operate within when engaged in violent encounters. This is similar to the 'not real life' element discussed by the subjects of this study. For example, one quote from a criminal after he has been arrested illustrates this altered perspective:

> Well, you know, when I'm actually under arrest, you know, its a serious matter, you know. Its something... its something... I gotta face reality then (p. 76).

This person was being flagrantly verbally abusive toward the police officers, and seemed to consider it a 'game' in which he tried to 'bait' the police as much as he could without getting caught. Once apprehended, the game was not funny anymore, and he had to 'face reality'.

These are only a few examples of the many areas where the results from the research by Toch overlaps with the results of this thesis. There are many others. For example, Toch devotes nearly a chapter to the type of person who fights to create or maintain his image or reputation. This apparent motivation to fight is clearly supported in this research as well. An in depth analysis of the material by Toch and of other related material would be very valuable in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the violent incident in all of its various contexts.

Certain aspects of the violent incident were elucidated that also might be worthy of further investigation. Focussing in on these specific aspects would complement the existing research. For example, this research has provided evidence to suggest that players are aware of the social limits that constrain behavior, and that this awareness of limits gradually receeds as the violent incident is engaged in. In particular this awareness appears to receed as a player gets more aroused and intense, i.e., from the escalation that typically occurs in fighting in hockey.

These limits are similar to the controls on behavior that Megaree (1973) discussed in terms of overcontrolled versus undercontrolled personality types. His research suggests that individuals develop psychological control mechanisms for coping with their desire to respond to provoking incidents. His research focussed on analyzing and categorizing these various mechanisms of control. A further understanding of the 'experience' of this 'control', and particularly of 'losing control' would complement his research. This study could provide a starting point for that research. One hypothesis worth pursuing, that is suggested from this research, is whether arousal and a decreased awareness of these limits is associated with the loss of control studied by Megaree. This research suggests that as arousal increased awareness would decrease.

One final conclusion can be noted from this research. Although not specifically oriented towards providing a method or rationale for reducing fighting in hockey, this research has uncovered some clear evidence which can guide this attempt, and which will be elaborated here. It has been illustrated that players are aware of the social controls prohibiting fighting in hockey, and that they are aware of when these controls change due to changes in the environment (i.e., when its a close game, and/or between junior and university hockey). It has also been illustrated that players are able, to a degree, to control

their desires to fight others. Many are very successful in making the transition from junior to university hockey. Where the formal rules are different, the players develop a different way of responding to provocations. If players are aware of these penalties, and if they are able to alter their behavior when these penalties change, it can be suggested that by making the penalties more severe, incidences of fighting in hockey will be reduced. Further, if the penalties are made severe enough incidences of fighting in hockey should be able to be erradicated.

Thus, although no attempt has been made to find out how to reduce fighting in hockey, an understanding of this experience from the view of those who have been involved in it has provided valuable information that can aid any attempts to reduce the prevalence of these incidences. This is an important testimony of the importance of this type of research, and of this thesis in particular.

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XI. APPENDIX: TWO LISTS OF CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

anger
be first
body feelings
can't describe
catharsis
challenge / contest
chance element
cheap shot
code or law
communicate
concentration
consciousness / awareness
control of fight
decisions
dominance / superiority
embarassment / put on the spot
emotionally aroused
expectations
fatigue
fear / hesitation
frustration
goals
hatred
happens suddenly
hesitation / fear
hesitation / groggy
instigator
instinct / running on emotions
intensity
intimidation
junior vs. univ. hockey
the look
loss of control / threshold
obediance / conformity
observers
pain
predetermination
pride
provocation
psycho / looney types
put on the spot
rapport
reflection
refusal
remembering
reinforcement
respect
retaliation
roles
sanctions
spectators
spiral upwards
switch over
time / no time to attend

anger
backing down
bail out
bragging
be first
beat up
body feelings
can't describe
catharsis
challenge / contest
chance element
cheap shot
code or law
coaches
communication
concentration narrowed
consciousness / awareness
control of fight
covering up
dazed and groggy
decisions
description
dominance / superiority
draws
embarassment
emotionally aroused
expectations
fair fight
fatigue
fear
frustration
his own game
projecting goals
hatred
happens suddenly
hesitation
humour
injuries
instigator
instinct
intensity
intimidation
junior vs. university
labels
likes and dislikes
limit
the look
losing
loss of control
moral judgements
obediance
observers
pain
pedetermination

winner

pride
protector / enforcer
provocation
psycho / looney type
put on the spot
rapport
referees
refusal
reinforcement
remembering
reputation
respect
retaliation
roles
sanctions
self-image
spectators
spiral upwards
start
street fights vs. hockey fights
switch over
team
threshold
time
why
winner
yapping at you